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By Jennifer Senior

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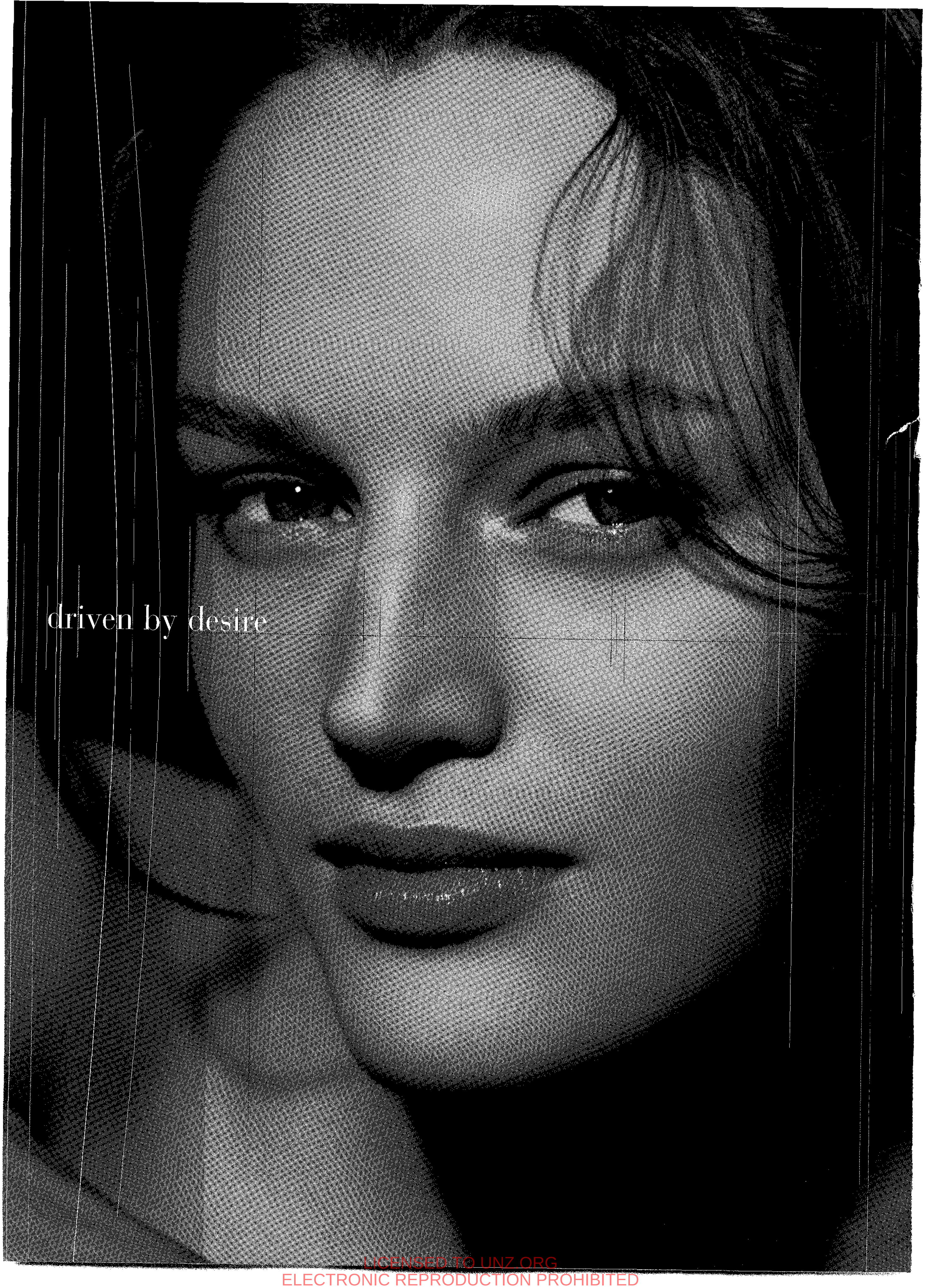

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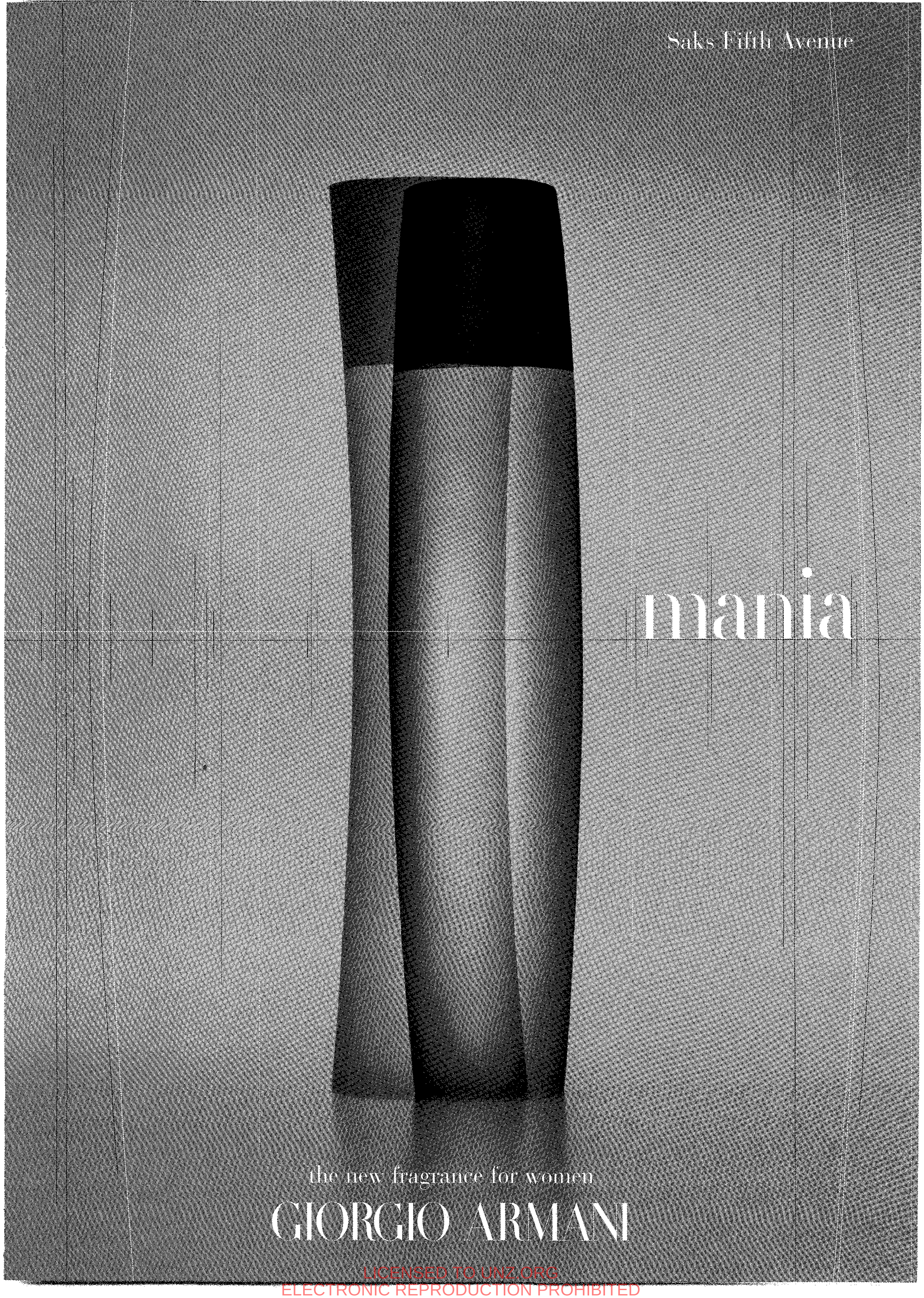
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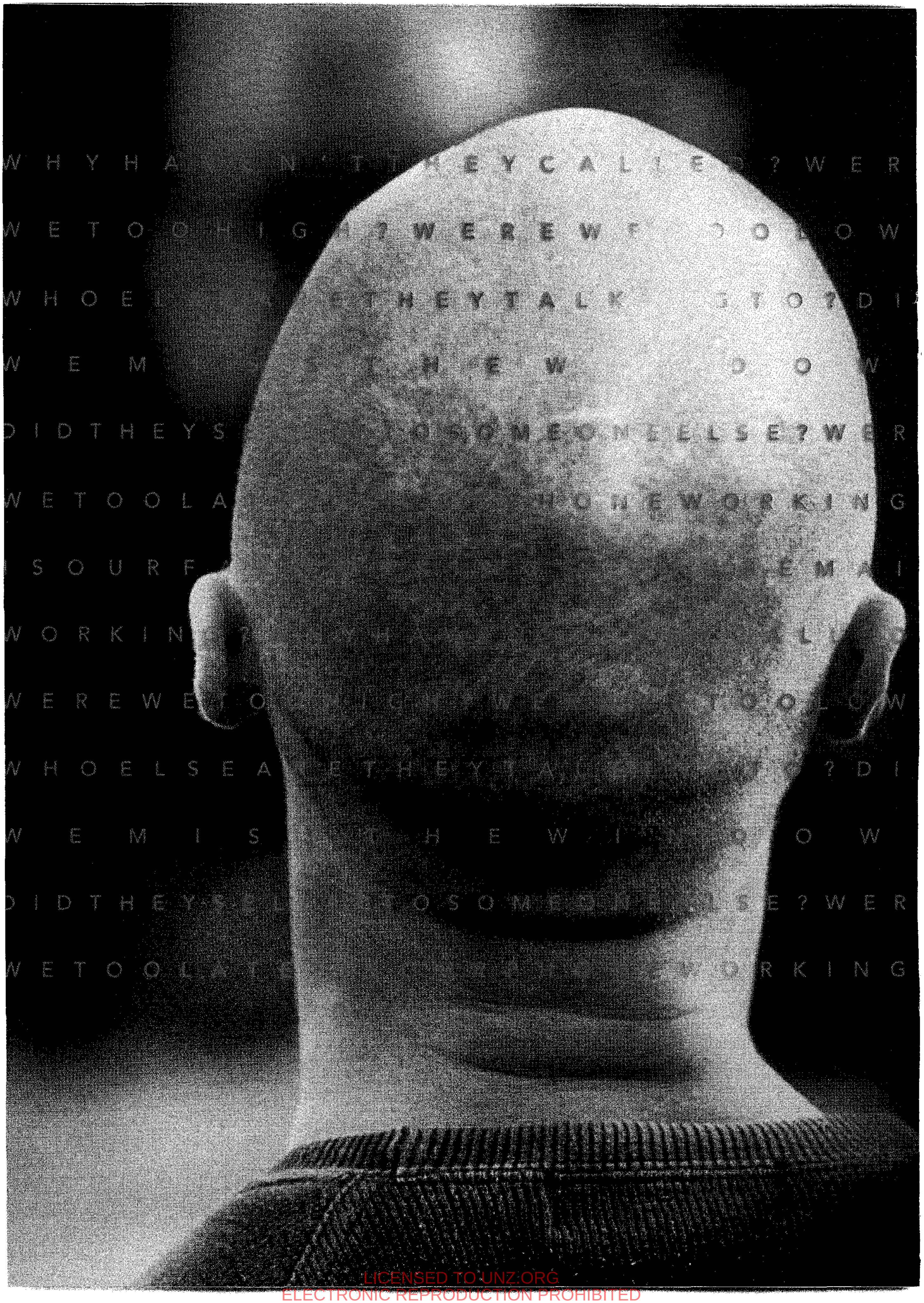
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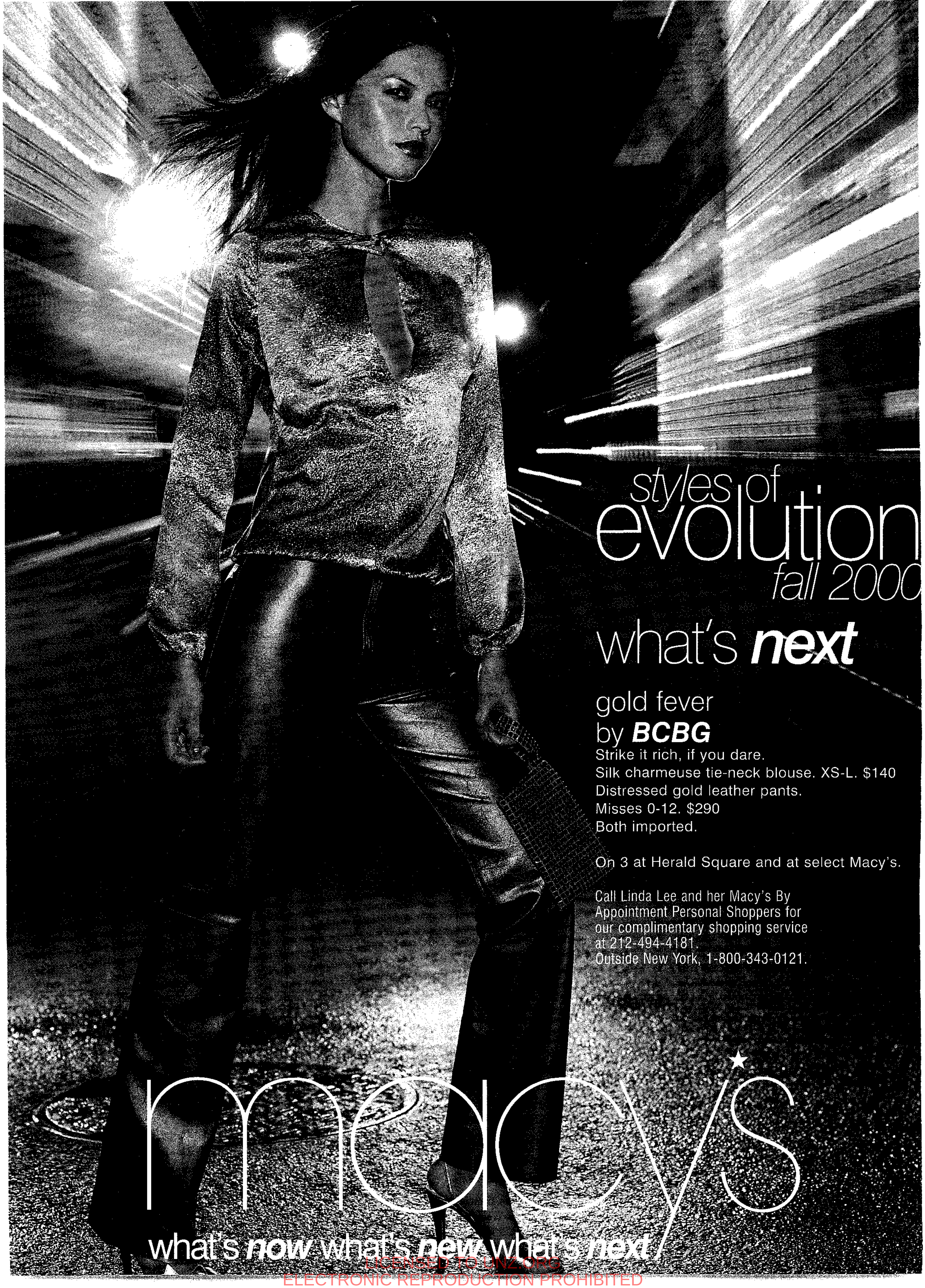
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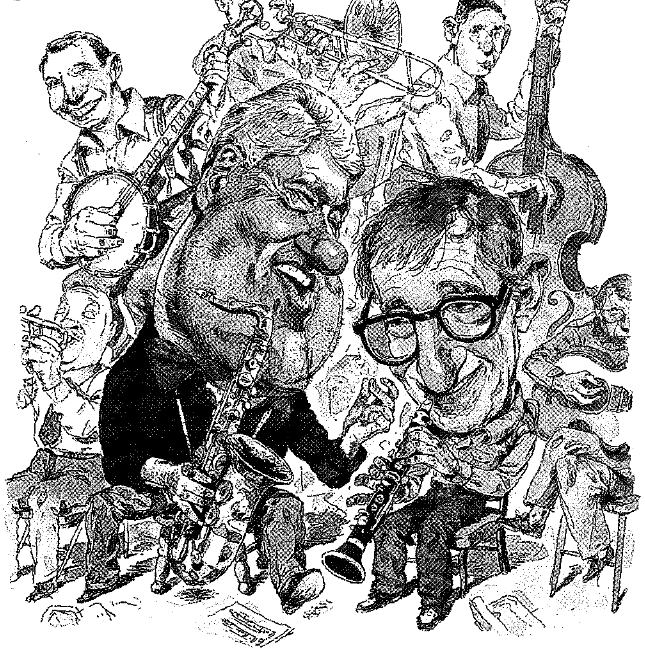

> *"Some people go to New York and they're never really a New Yorker. Bill Clinton will be a New Yorker in five minutes."*
>
> DONNA SHALALA, PAGE 34

34 Mr. Clinton Goes to New York

By Jennifer Senior

Bill Clinton has always been ambitious, lustful, and self-involved—a New Yorker waiting to happen. And once he's taken a bite out of the Big Apple, there's going to be no keeping him on the farm in Chappaqua. There'll be morning jogs in Central Park, lunches at the Grill Room, and dinners at McDonald's all over town. And if he can make it *here* . . .

42 Queerer Than Thou **By Charles Kaiser**

Showtime's *Queer As Folk* boldly goes where no TV show has gone before: gay men's bedrooms. And what it finds—29-year-olds taking teenagers home with them—has made it a risqué, controversial hit in England. But is America ready to see gay sex in the city?

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By Sarah Bernard

Charged with reviving a slumping American icon, Coach's creative director Reed Krakoff took the company's bags from the pages of the *The Official Preppy Handbook* to the cover of *Women's Wear Daily.* One day, he might even be carrying them into a Coach hotel.

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By Ruth J. Katz

You'd think Manhattanites would sooner starve than cook. But a shocking number wield a whisk in their own kitchens, with a little help from brilliant instructors who teach everything from mastering moussaka to cooking up five easy pizzas.

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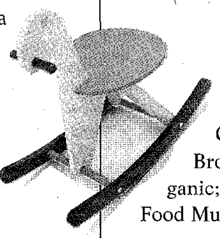

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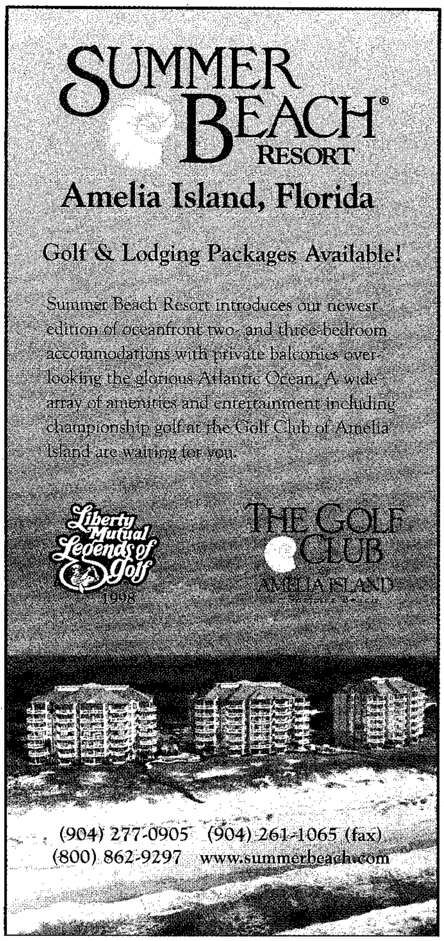
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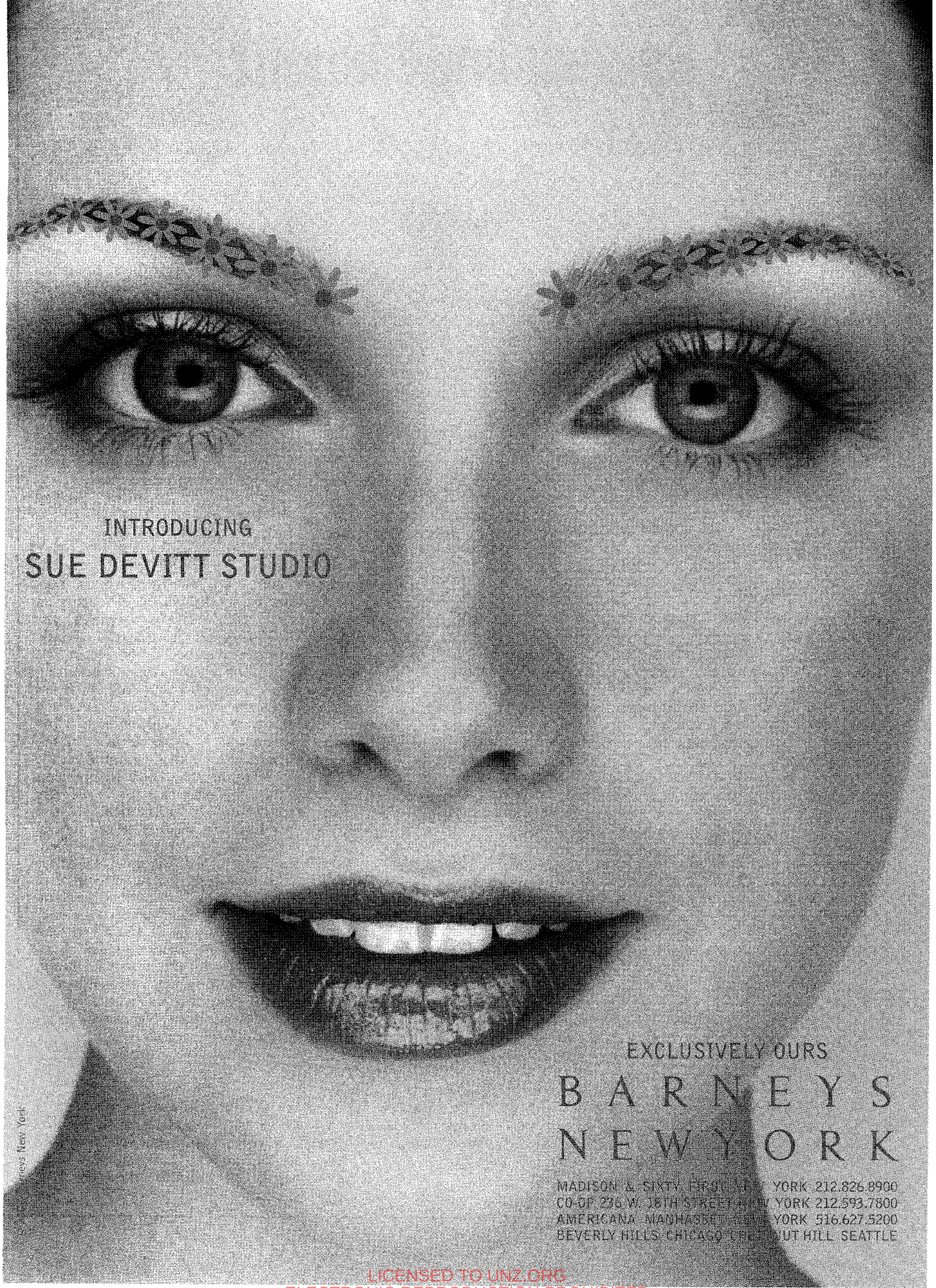
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Speech Impediment

Why Gore of all people should not be thanking Bill Clinton for the return of the political speech; where else to find a deal on your dream house.

I LOVED MICHAEL WOLFF'S TAKE ON THE return of the speech ["Media: Speech Reach," September 4]. However, it is unfair to compare Gore with Clinton in style, since they are not of the same species. Because Gore doesn't have the charisma to pass himself off as a celebrity, he is burdened with the task of being a "statesman" and meeting the speaking criteria that come with that image. Being a statesman is hard, and that's why Clinton chose to be a celebrity. It's much more fun, and he has the charisma to pull it off. But more important, we forgive our celebrities, and Clinton needs that more. As with many of Hollywood's bad boys, he's always doing something that requires forgiveness, and he's got the speaking persona ("smile, lips, eyes") to get it.

Robert John Keiber
MANHATTAN

MICHAEL WOLFF WRITES THAT "WE REALLY would like someone to say something grand. A little poetry and exhortation." Well, we had that someone in Adlai Stevenson, the last presidential candidate to be genuinely drafted for the office. And we rejected him. Perhaps it is true that people get what they deserve.

Mildred C. Kuner
ITHACA, N.Y.

Barkin Mad

IN YOUR ARTICLE ON DA SILVANO ["THE Pasta Connection," by Meryl Gordon, September 4], there was a reference to Ellen Barkin's having worked there as a bartender "in her pre-Perelman days." This may be a news flash to Ms. Gordon, but Ellen Barkin was Ellen Barkin long before she met Ronald Perelman. How "pre" are we talking about? I find this insulting, and I don't even know her.

Gale Hysler
MALVERNE, N.Y.

Letters may be edited for space and clarity. They should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, New York *Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, or sent via e-mail to NYLetters@primediamags.com. Please include a daytime phone number.*

Bronx Tale

YOUR OTHERWISE EXCELLENT ARTICLE ON the next real-estate frontiers ["Home in Your Range," by Allen Salkin, September 4] omits one of New York's best-kept secrets: Mott Haven in the South Bronx. Fifteen minutes by subway to Grand Central, Mott Haven is a treasure trove of historically landmarked Victorian row houses on friendly tree-lined streets within easy walking distance of all conveniences and shopping. I found my Victorian townhouse at 419 East 140th Street two years ago for $110,000. Prices have risen in the past two years, but a totally renovated, landmarked home can be had today for under $250,000. In fact, there is a beauty for sale right across the street from me.

Sam Oglesby
THE BRONX

I CAN'T IMAGINE WHO ALLEN SALKIN SPOKE to in College Point. It surely wasn't anyone who has lived in the area, as I have, for more than 40 years, or he might not have put North and Center Drives in College Point. Anyone will tell you that's Malba, which is nestled beneath the Whitestone Bridge. Moreover, the article failed to mention the No. 7 train, which runs from Main Street, Flushing, to Manhattan, rated one of the best in the city. More locals take the No. 7 than the LIRR.

Doris Baglione
QUEENS

Take a Tip

IT MAKES NO SENSE TO ME TO TIP WAITpeople some number determined by the check, or by the tax on the check ["Tipping Points," by Brian Farnham, August 21]. Regardless of what you order, they must make the same number of trips to your table and serve the same number of people eating there. Try this solution: No matter what you eat, breakfast is $3 per head, lunch is $5 per head, dinner is $10 per head. This way, the waiter doesn't make out better if you're having filet mignon and/or worse if it's just a burger night.

Sue Klein
FREEPORT, N.Y.

Minute Rice

READING THE ARTICLE ON WRITER CHRIStopher Rice ["Reality Bites," by James Servin, September 4], I found myself wanting to reach for an antacid. If it's true that great things cannot be achieved without nerve, then the son of Anne Rice is fated for great things, indeed, for the boy has no shortage of hubris. Does he really think that the average 22-year-old writer gets an audience with superagent Lynn Nesbit? Or that the average first novel—let alone one by such a youth—is greeted by a two-book contract?

Richard Fleming
WINTER PARK, FLA.

Just Jealous

IT WAS NICE TO SEE YOUR READERS TAKE the materialistic whiners of your recent article "Thy Neighbor's Budget" [by David D. Kirkpatrick, August 7] to task. However, the worst offender in this game of acquisitive one-upmanship remains unnamed—you. *New York* has transformed itself from an eclectic and interesting look at this city into a tiresome chronicle of the rich and self-important. With endless editorial on the careers of the rich; budgeting problems of the rich; failed marriages of the rich; hip, D.J.-ing kids of the rich; etc., you would have us believe that everyone in this town makes six figures and is clamoring for a table at Balthazar. Not only is this a gross distortion, but it is offensive to readers who lead normal lives and who are bored and annoyed by your continued focus on the narcissistic and affluent. Worse, your continued obsession with wealth and those who have it adds to the rampant materialism that poisons this town and is making it a shallower, less interesting place to live—L.A. with public transit.

Mike Strassman
BROOKLYN

Correction Because of an editing error, the wrong by-line appeared on the story "Crowe About It" in our Fall Preview issue (September 11). The story was written by George Kalogerakis. *New York* regrets the error.

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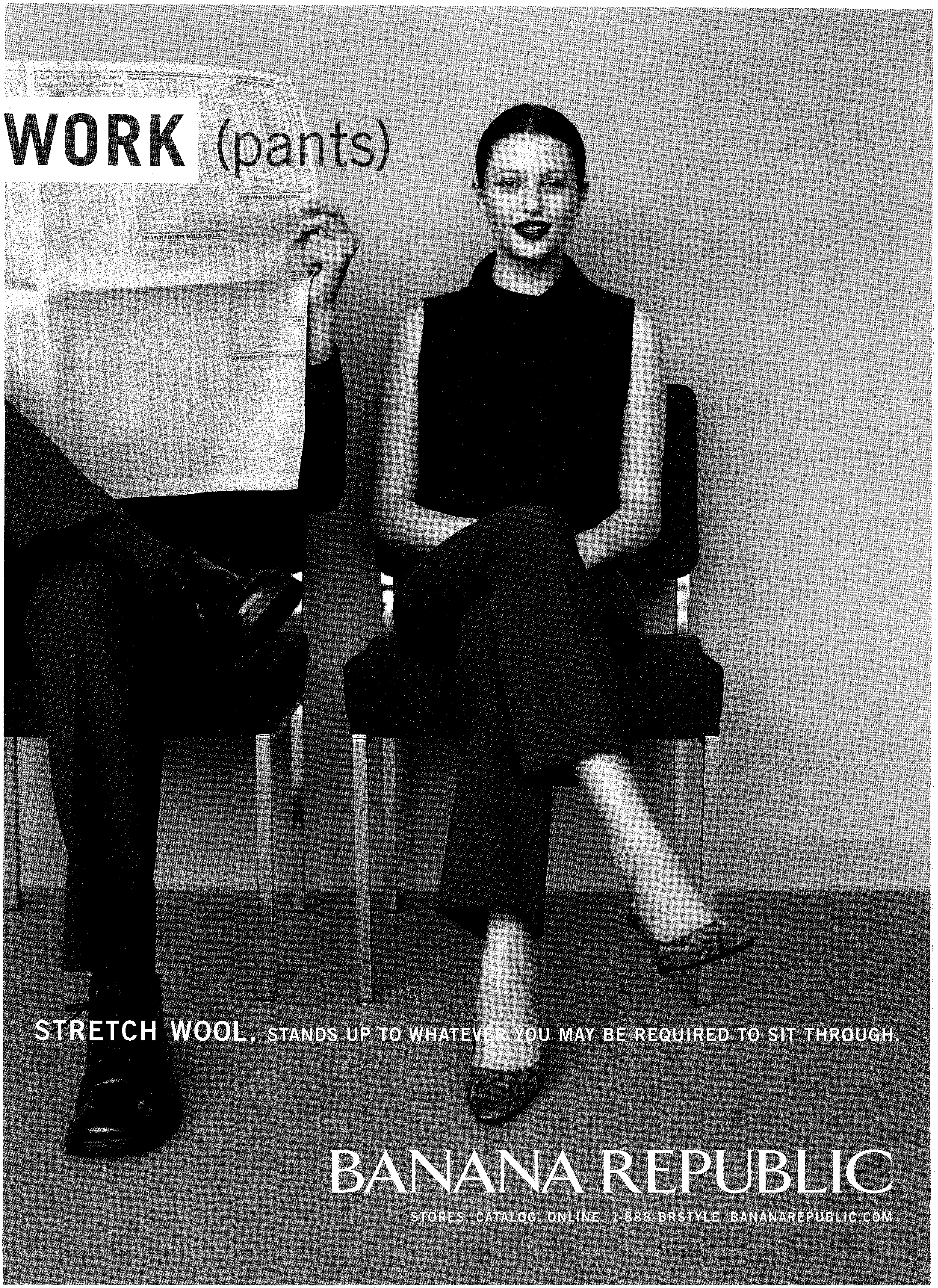
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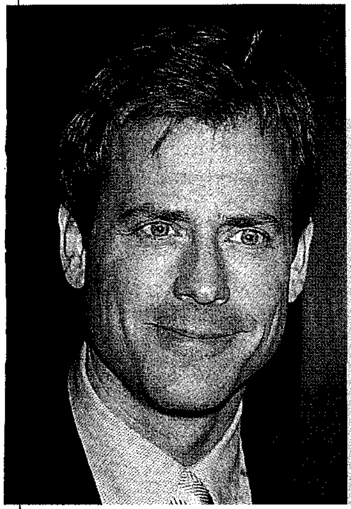


KINNEAR NURSES SURREAL CONFUSION

Nurse Betty star **Greg Kinnear** (pictured) is just like the rest of us: The French really freak him out. At the flick's premiere party last week, we asked the actor—who plays a soap star tracked down by an obsessed fan (**Renée Zellweger**) who thinks his character is real—whether he's ever had trouble discerning life from fiction. "When we took the movie to Cannes," he told us, "aside from the whole seedy underbelly of selling movies, there's also the experience of being put in a velvety little bubble and watching the movie in front of all these French film lovers. It was very surreal. I blurred a *lot* of lines that night." The actor told us he hasn't personally had trouble with hypervigilant fans: "I think that happens more to talk-show hosts, people who come into your living room every night. I can understand why **David Letterman** has to double-lock his door."

JOHNNIE WALKER: NOT BLACK ENOUGH?

It may be hard to imagine, but a Hamptons bash became grounds for a unique racial protest over Labor Day weekend. A Johnnie Walker Black–sponsored party at the Synergy Spa last Friday momentarily hit a sober note because it was packed with too many white people. When execs at the liquor's advertising firm, Vigilante Integrated, showed up midway into the festivities, they became enraged that so few African-American revelers were present—and began packing up the bottles of whiskey on the spot and carting them out to a waiting truck. One of the Vigilante reps told us that they had supplied the liquor with the understanding that the event would target their new demographic: black women. But **Ralph Gibli**, president of Horizon Entertainment, which handled the deal between Johnnie Walker and the Synergy Spa, says the protest was misguided. "They never told us about any such demographic," he said. "We showed them the guest list, which included people like **Taye Diggs**, **Jennifer Lopez**, **Busta Rhymes**, and **Faith Evans**, so maybe they *assumed* it would be a mainly black event. But come on—it's the Hamptons. What did they expect?"

THAT'S SOME FIXER-UPPER

He owns the most expensive apartment in Manhattan, and **Stephen Schwarzman** plans to eliminate any evidence that fallen tycoon **Saul Steinberg** ever lived there. As *New York* reported in June, Schwarzman paid a record $37 million for Steinberg's three-story, 34-room penthouse at 740 Park Avenue. Now the Blackstone Group president and CEO has signed a two-year lease on an apartment at the Waldorf Towers, signalling that it could be quite a while before he moves into his high-priced spread. According to a highly placed broker, Schwarzman plans to camp out in his rental pad while he has his palatial residence completely gutted and renovated. The source, who's seen the Park Avenue Shangri-la, insists there's no need for a makeover: "It's elaborate and mint, and anybody would be delighted to live there. Except him, apparently." Schwarzman did not return calls.

SWEET SMELL OF RUSSELL SIMMONS

Not content with only music, media, and clothing empires, **Russell Simmons** (pictured) is branching out into new territory: perfume. Simmons recently signed on with Stern Fragrances—the company responsible for the scents of such fashionable outfits as Oscar de la Renta and Valentino—to launch a perfume and cologne to complement his Phat Farm clothing line. Though the deal is in the early stages, the still-unnamed line will be ready for distribution within the next year.

JERRY O'CONNELL: LORD OF THE DANCE

One final **Puffy**-in-the-Hamptons story for the year 2000: When the White Party finally ended at Mr. Combs's stately digs, the crowd headed to Conscience Point, where actor **Taye Diggs** had such a good time he neglected to retrieve his credit card from the bar at the end of the night and had to drag himself back the next day to collect it. While Diggs forgot his plastic, actor **Jerry O'Connell** forgot his pride. According to a witness, Jerry and his brother **Charlie** stupefied onlookers when they took to the dance floor and proceeded to invent a decidedly bizarre new move. "One would start running in place as fast as he could while the other held him there by grabbing onto the back of his pants," says the source. "It looked like something out of *A Night at the Roxbury.*" The tipster tells us that stunned spectators thought the dance had to be a joke, but "they were totally serious. It went on for a good ten minutes." Well, at least the dancing duo got themselves a good workout.

Photographs: left, Robin Platzer/Twin Images; right, Patrick McMullan.

ESPOSITO AND PLUMMER: CRAVEN SOME BLOOD

One young actress in the upcoming *Wes Craven Presents: Dracula 2000* probably wished she had a coffin to crawl into after meeting fellow cast member **Christopher Plummer** early in the production. "We were all pretty intimidated at first, because here is this legend and here *we* are," the flick's star, **Jennifer Esposito** (pictured) tells us. "We didn't really know what to say, and one girl, just trying to make small talk, said, 'So, have you ever done a musical?' " Plummer, renowned for his role as the head of the Von Trapp clan in *The Sound of Music,* "looked at us like, 'These poor little children,' " Esposito relates. Initial stiffness aside, Esposito assures us that Plummer "was absolutely hysterical." *Dracula,* which opens in December, couldn't be more different from Plummer's famous nun-loving musical. "It's not a slasher movie, but a very crisp and sensual, sexy kind of film," says Esposito. "There are fangs, people getting their throats ripped out. . . . I drank more sugary blood than I care to admit." But the gore did have its good side. "I got to throw people through windows and jump off balconies. When do you ever get to do that?" Not nearly often enough anymore.

DIRECTOR'S DAD 'WHACKS' BURSTYN

Give your parents an inch and they ham it up all over your movie. When acclaimed *Pi* director **Darren Aronofsky** was shooting his second feature, *Requiem for a Dream*—based on the **Hubert Selby Jr.** novel—in his hometown of Brooklyn, he gave his father, **Abraham**, a bit part. Though the elder Aronofsky was supposed to sit quietly reading the paper during a subway scene, he decided to ad-lib a line of his own, shouting at **Ellen Burstyn**, who plays a woman hopped-up on diet pills, "You're a whack!" The good son allowed it, telling us, "My dad now has his first speaking role in a motion picture." *Requiem*—which opens next month—isn't Aronofsky's first misadventure related to the work of Selby. The director tells us he was studying for his freshman finals at the Harvard library when he noticed a book titled *Last Exit to Brooklyn.* "When you're from Brooklyn and you see anything related to Brooklyn, you're immediately interested," he says. "I had no clue what I was about to open. From sentence one, I was done, and so were my finals: I blew them off and I read." Eventually, he did manage to graduate.

KENNEDY NOT VIP? HANSON ON A SPREE

KENNEDY UNDERCOVER: Keeping a low profile doesn't always work to the benefit of **Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg**. A source at the Hamptons Classic Horse Show reports that Kennedy turned down numerous invitations to hang out under the VIP tent, opting instead to watch the action with her children in the bleachers with the rest of the teeming masses. After the horses had done their prancing, Kennedy decided to drop under the tent to say hello to a pal—but at that point, getting back there wasn't so easy. She was rebuffed by a surly security guard who, not recognizing Kennedy, coolly informed her that an armband was required for entrance. Luckily, after an awkward minute or so, someone recognized her and helped her join the rest of the elite.

HANSON WORLD: Steve Hanson continues his quest for domination of the New York restaurant scene. In March, the restaurateur behind Ruby Foo's and Blue Water Grill will open two more spots: a bilevel high-end regional-Italian restaurant in a building he has just purchased at 206 Spring Street and a subterranean sushi-and-jazz room in the Triangle Building at 675 Hudson, which he leased last spring. Plans are also under way for a trattoria at the Hudson Street locale. And that would make ten in Manhattan.

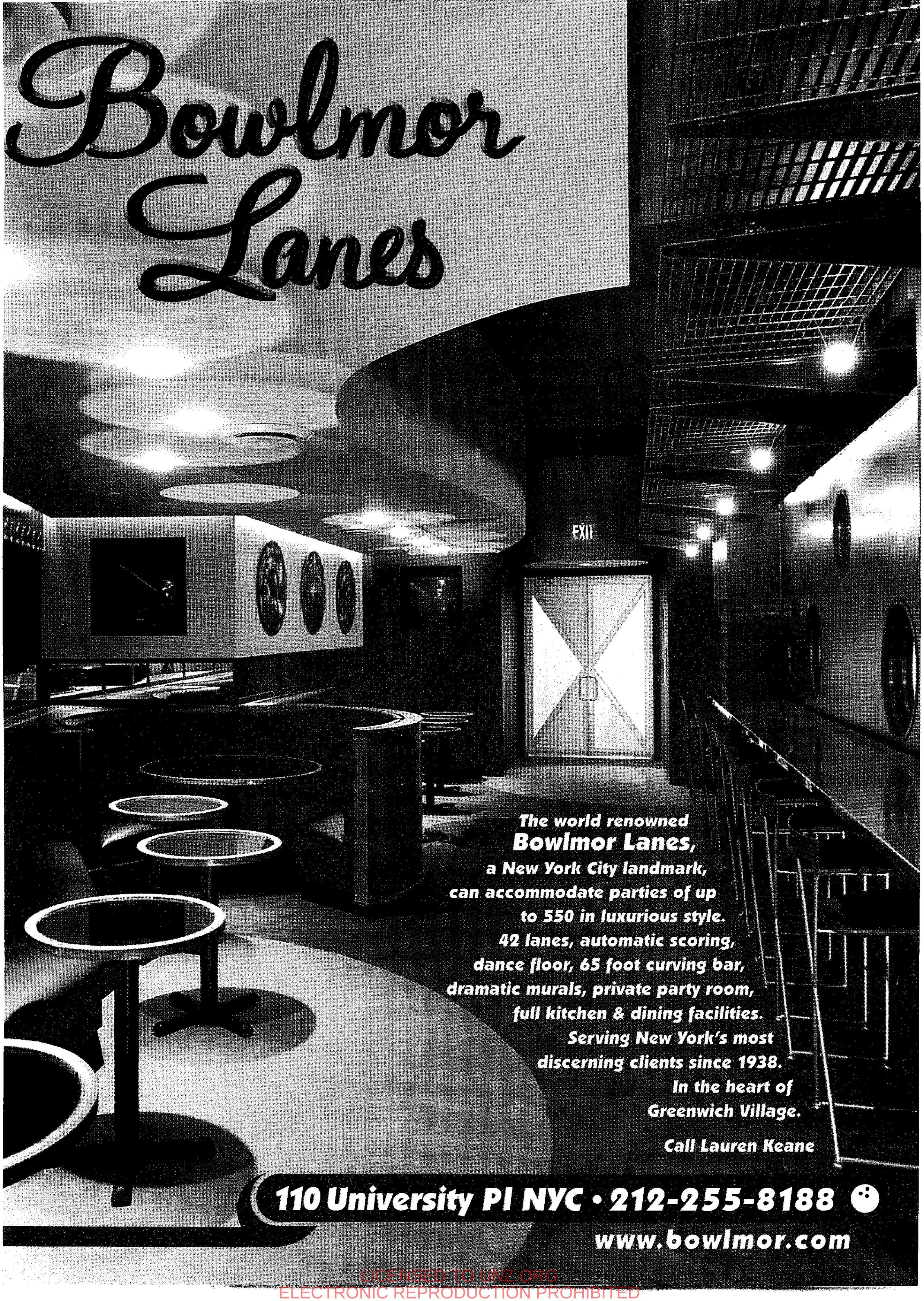
GET YOUR 212: Here's entrepreneurship for you: ME.net, a new Website that provides users with a single number to access their phone, voice mail, e-mail, and fax, is trying to capitalize on the Manhattan-based craze to keep within the 212 area code by offering up numbers with the holy digits to the first customers to sign on. New Yorkers whose social status has already been smeared by the dreaded 646 can use a feature that would forward the 212 number to their home. But be warned: They've only got 500 of the coveted prefixes on offer.

Additional reporting by David Amsden, Carl Swanson, and Abbey Goodman.

F.Y.I. FASHION A SOURCE OF CONTENTION

F.Y.I. Fashion Source—the Zagat-like guide for shopaholics favored by **Julia Roberts**, **Julianna Margulies**, and **Amanda Peet**—is clashing with some retailers. Editor-in-chief **Tara Lowenberg** tells us she's been in little tiffs with two Madison Avenue mainstays, Barneys and Michael's consignment store, and the hipper-than-thou downtown boutique A Détacher. Lowenberg says Barneys informed her that it would no longer be selling the guide upon reading that its staff was "at best aloof," and Michael's, deemed in the guide the "Soup Nazi of consignment," asked to be removed from future editions. (Barneys has a different take, claiming it never intended to distribute the guide; Michael's had no comment.) The most extreme case comes with A Détacher, which was referred to in the guide as "meant to look a little rough around the edges." The owners, Lowenberg says, "called me up and said they would appreciate it if I never set foot in their store again." The folks at A Détacher, meanwhile, confirm that they were "unhappy," but call Lowenberg's claim about being blacklisted "ludicrous."

Photographs: top, Walter Weissman/Globe Photos; bottom, Andrea Renault/Globe Photos.



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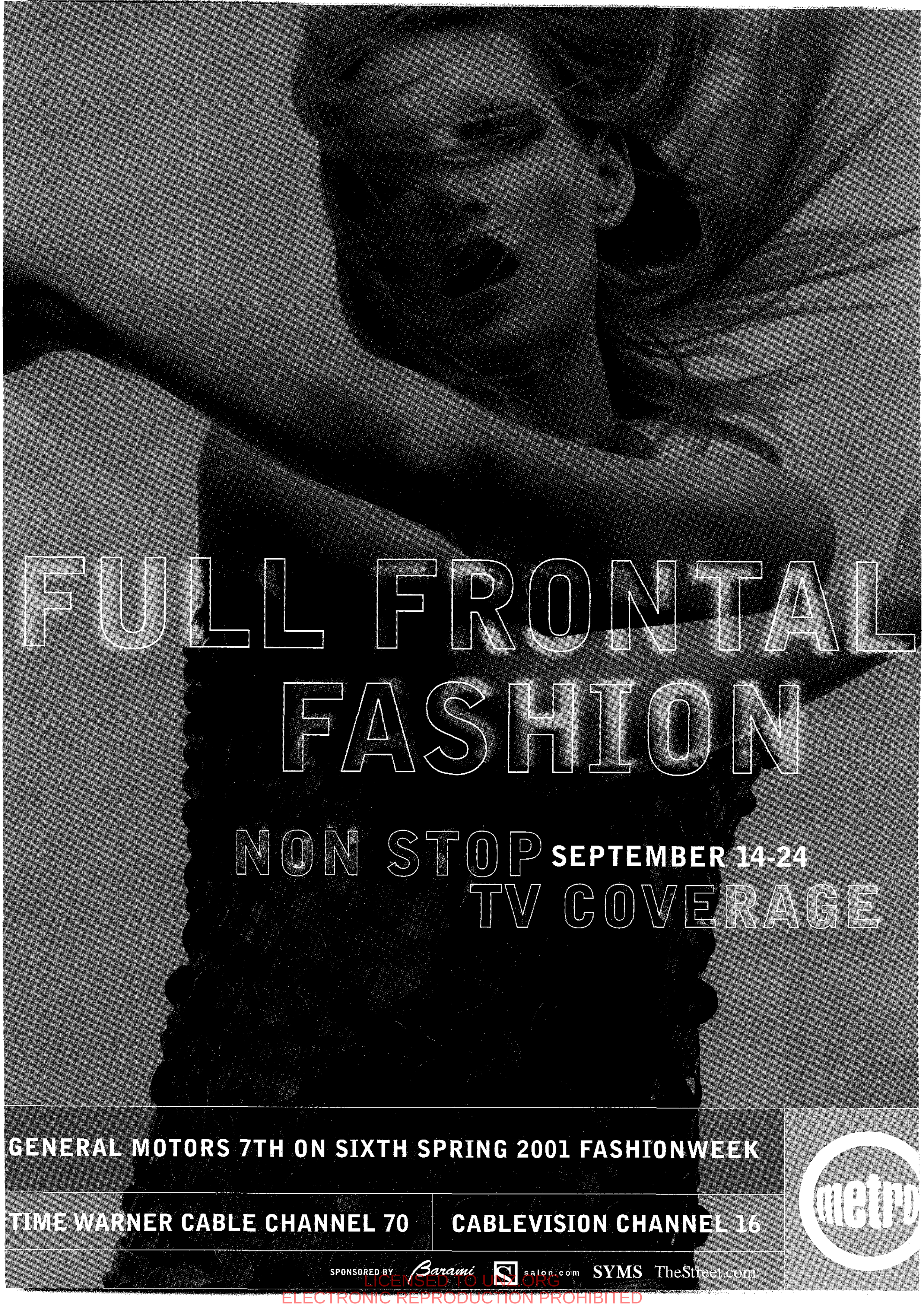
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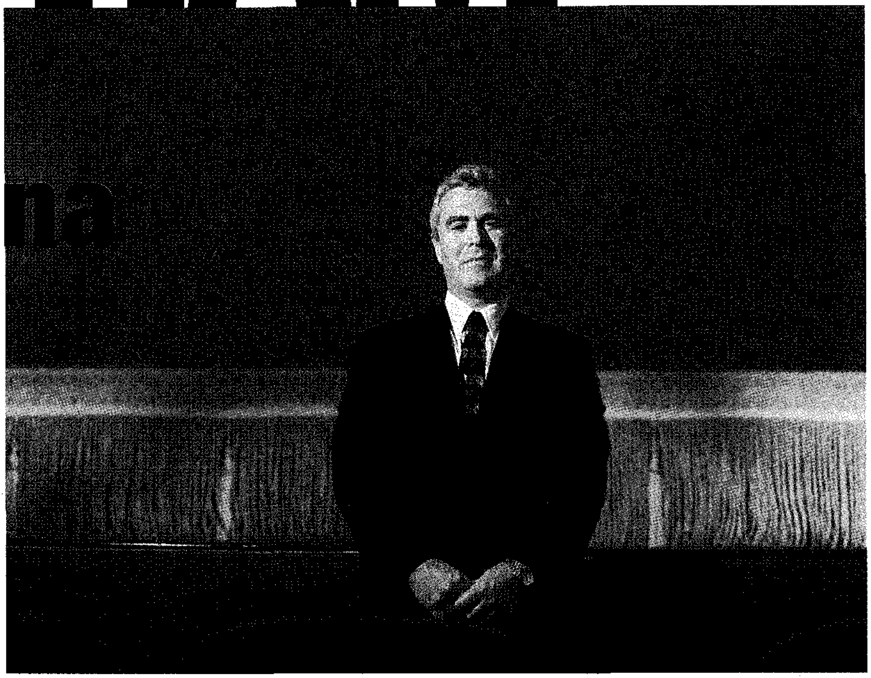
GOTHAM

Top Banana

Todd Haimes turned the bankrupt Roundabout into a Broadway powerhouse. So where's his standing ovation?



WYNN HANDMAN DIDN'T KNOW what hit him. The legendary acting coach and co-founder of the American Place Theatre, which helped launch Faye Dunaway, Eric Bogosian, and John Leguizamo, had more than two years left on his lease at the funky, high-ceilinged Sixth Avenue space where his tiny nonprofit group had performed for almost three decades. But when he called his landlord earlier this year to see about an extension, Handman was told that the building's new owner had already handed the space to the Roundabout Theatre Company—a bigger nonprofit with much deeper pockets. Handman wasn't even invited to haggle. "This is the reality of the theater-and-real-estate situation right now," the teacher of Richard Gere, Dustin Hoffman, and Alec Baldwin muses dejectedly. "I'm considered a pioneer. I started in '62 in a moribund church. We used the word *alternative* then, and we stayed that way. They have an affluent board of directors, members who know people in real estate, and I suppose one of them knew about the new owner."

As it turns out, Handman guessed right. Todd Haimes, the Roundabout's artistic director, says the building's new owner happens to be a longtime subscriber. It's only the latest exercise in empire-building for Haimes: In the same decades that American Place was staying alternative, the Roundabout traded up from the basement of a Chelsea supermarket to Union Square and finally to Broadway, almost tripling in size to become the second-largest nonprofit theater group in the country (the largest being Lincoln Center Theater). Haimes, who just this summer reopened the old Selwyn as the American Airlines Roundabout Theatre, explains the annexation of the American Place by saying, "We were desperate for a second stage. With 40,000 subscribers, you need a certain size just to get the people through the run."

The theater world hasn't seen this kind of manifest destiny since Joseph Papp, already ensconced at his Public Theatre complex in the East Village, took over Vivân Beaumont Theater for four tumultuous seasons in the seventies. These days, nonprofits thrive by targeting mainstream audiences with revivals that commercial producers are too scared to mount, like the Roundabout's 600-seat *Cabaret* or this season's *Follies*. While Papp had *A Chorus Line* and other hits that migrated to Broadway, everything the Roundabout does in the new American Airlines Theatre is, by definition, a Broadway show. Rocco Landesman, the outspoken commercial producer and head of Jujamcyn Theaters, recently sniped in the *Times* that nonprofits like the Roundabout had lost their edge, becoming little more than incubators for commercial hits. To some, this

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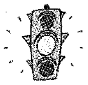
POLITICS Campaign-Trail Traffic Report



Laz counters greenies with blue-shirts, nabbing PBA nod. *Quelle* sue-preeze. Post-election, we'd love to see a tally of how many cops voted for Hill. ●

Everybody sing: "Let me tell you how it will be / Fake stats for you, bad press for me / 'Cause it's my tax plan / Ye-ahhh, it's my / tax plaa-aan . . ." ●

Hill speaks her green piece: Sierra Club endorsement and backing from RFK Jr. Ricky wanted Sierra bad. Guess not having a voting record can come in handy. ●

Poll puts Hill within ten points upstate. Ten's good for a Dem, but which way do undecideds lean? Key 7 percent could be Rick's solution. ○

Photographs: top, Pak Fung Wong; bottom, Richard B. Levine (2). Illustration by Ingo Fast.

Banana *continued from page 15*

might be stating the obvious—are nonprofits supposed to just ignore audiences?—but Haimes thinks Landesman may be missing the point. "To me, our evolution has been entirely organic," Haimes says. "If Rocco wants to do Chekhov, do Chekhov. It's not like we stole *Uncle Vanya.*"

Silver-haired and 44, with an M.B.A. from Yale, Haimes isn't of the same experimental-theater generation as Handman or the late Papp. His parents, he says, were shocked at how he decided to use his degree. But he has brought a businessman's bent to the job: He helped rescue the Roundabout from bankruptcy in the mid-eighties by cultivating new audiences and staging risky shows with cusping stars, like *Anna Christie* with Liam Neeson and Natasha Richardson, *A View From the Bridge* with Anthony LaPaglia, and *Three Sisters* with Calista Flockhart (who left two weeks early to do a certain TV pilot for David E. Kelley). "I'd love to see the theater get involved in developing *new* musicals," Haimes says, a bit worried, "but that's very, very expensive. Being a neurotic Jew, I feel much less comfortable with success than with failure. When I succeed, I think it's just farther to fall."

With two years left on his lease, Handman vows that "the American Place Theatre will go on. We're now actively looking for another space. Each of us nonprofit institutions has a vision of what it does—and we are two very different institutions." Haimes, for his part, has some sympathy for the colleague he's unseated. "The real-estate crunch has made it difficult, particularly for the small theaters," Haimes says. "I've spent more time on real estate in this job than I have on any of the shows. I mean, art is irrelevant if you're out of business."

ROBERT KOLKER

WORLD AFFAIRS

The UNinvited

Nobody move! Midtown falls hostage to diplomats.

NEW YORKERS LAST WEEK EQUATED THE United Nations not with political intransigence but with plain old gridlock. "They ought to move it out of New York!" said one very agitated cabbie named Mahmoud Mahmoud on Tuesday, as his taxi took twenty minutes to cover ten blocks of Park Avenue. The New York Palace hotel—perhaps because it's owned by the royal family of Brunei—housed no fewer than a dozen heads of state, including one entourage that took some 250 rooms. Notes the Palace's Jennifer Tsonas, "Some are protected by the State Department, some the Secret Service; we had NYPD presence, the Fire Department, those bomb-sniffing dogs. We're used to VIP security, but the difference here is that it's all at once." Anyone stopping for a drink at the hotel had to first pass a bar of an entirely different sort—a large concrete traffic barrier deposited in front of the Madison Avenue entrance, presumably to keep truck bombs out of Le Cirque.

Much less hubbub—and traffic of strictly the Internet kind—surrounded a quiet little group that was in town for their country's induction into the U.N. Tuvalu, a country made up of nine tiny islands in the South Pacific, until recently had an economy based largely on coconuts and fish. But in the digital age, it has discovered a third resource, one that Gilligan never imagined: Tuvaluan Websites carry the URL suffix ".tv," and it turns out that television companies are very happy to spend lots of money for those domain names. A Pasadena company, dotTV, will thus be giving Tuvalu $50 million over ten years for the rights to its Web addresses. The fee roughly doubles Tuvalu's gross domestic product, so the country can now afford U.N. dues, and on Tuesday its flag rose between Turkmenistan's and Uganda's. Now, *that's* a New Economy. CHRISTOPHER BONANOS

REAL ESTATE

Sex Tourism on Upper East Side

HARVARD PROFESSOR MARJORIE GARBER'S AFTERNOON debauch began with a bottle of Veuve Clicquot in the back of a black Rolls-Royce. She shared it with Corcoran Group real-estate broker Sharon Baum. Sy Presten, Corcoran's old-school, Brylcremed publicist, had invited the professor to go look at fancy apartments after someone in the office read Garber's new book, *Sex and Real Estate,* a lusty pop-scholarly treatise on "why we love houses." In it, Garber asserts that real estate "can be a primary object of affection and desire—not a displacement or a substitute or a metaphor." So when Presten called, she was hot to trot.

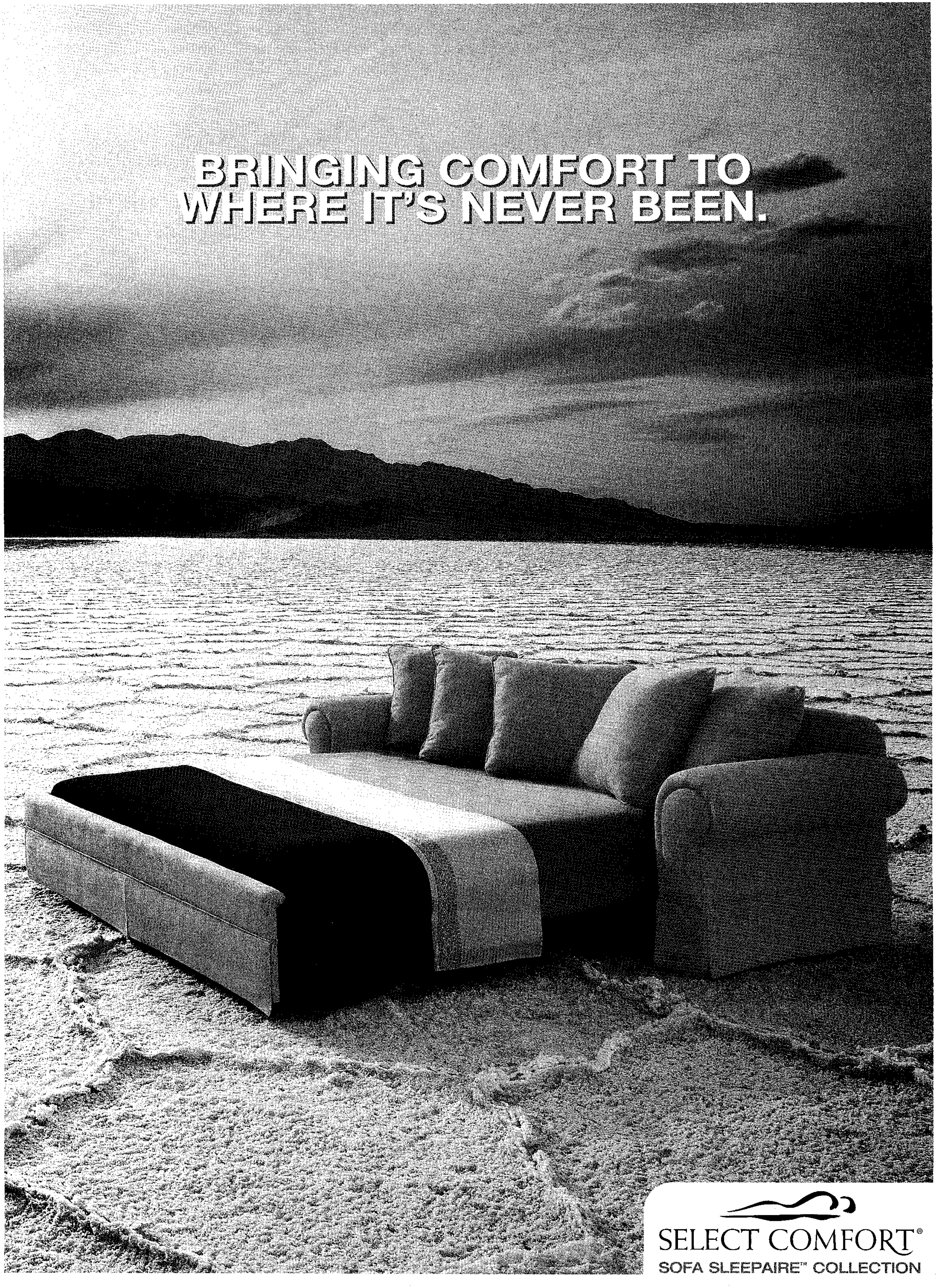
Garber is a big shot at Harvard, where hundreds of undergraduates throng her Shakespeare lectures. She owns a huge house in a chichi area of Cambridge and a place on Nantucket. After three books on the Bard, she started writing about cross-dressing, bisexuality, and dogs. *Sex and Real Estate* was somewhat viciously reviewed: *The New Republic* called it "so serenely silly—so untroubled by any whiff of a serious idea—as to invite a kind of awe." Did the other professors tease her about her subject matter? "Not to my face," she says. "The book was the best-seller at the Harvard Book Store the week it came out. So I know a lot of deans are reading it."

First stop: an apartment in the former Pulitzer mansion at 11 East 73rd Street. She and Baum, both dressed in black pantsuits (Baum's with a glittery SOLD brooch on her lapel), walk reverently through the dim wood-paneled tomb of the lobby. "Can you imagine this as your home?" asks Baum. "All too well," says Garber, rubbing her stomach as she admires the creaky, intricate floors. Upstairs, in the sunny, high-ceilinged yellow room that used to be the ballroom, Garber trills, "It's got that Auntie Mame feeling!"

As the Rolls proceeds up Park Avenue, Baum points out a huge townhouse that recently sold and could become a single-family house again ("It's like a dream!" says Garber, wringing her hands with excitement) and a $7 million duplex that was stripped of its details—though the new owner is going to "renovate it back." "That's a good punch line!" says Garber, who sees a similar shift in her own aesthetic, from modernism to traditionalism.

For the professor who made a name in gender studies, shelter fetish is just one more shame to overcome: "So many people say to me, 'I thought it was just me,' " she says, climbing into the car. "Now we can say it out loud." As she drives off, Presten growls, "That professor sure loves real estate. She was practically salivating." CARL SWANSON

Photograph: AP Wide World.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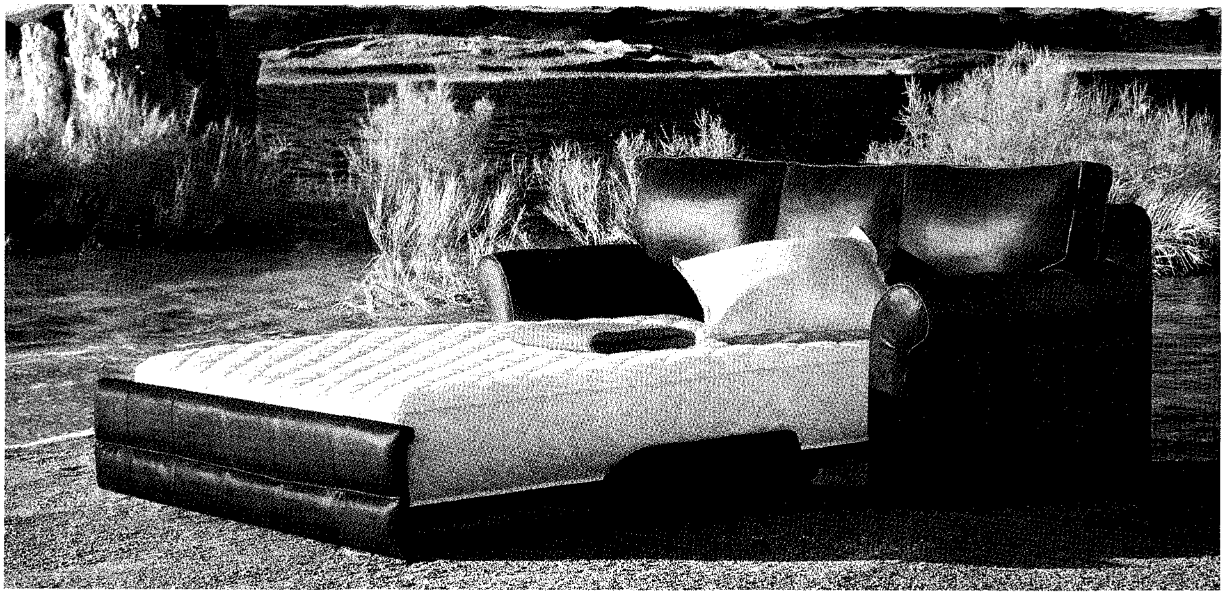

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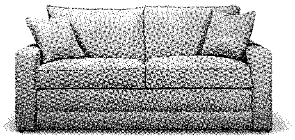

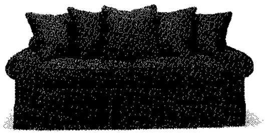

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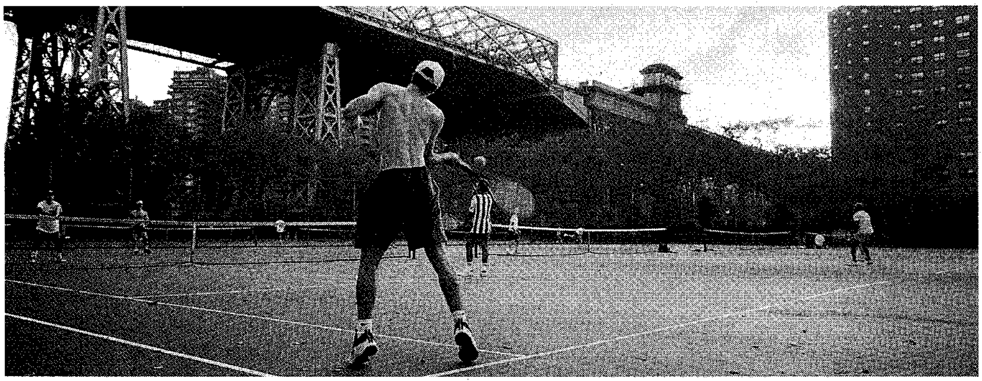
SPORTS

Tennis Il Society

Screeching subways and slumming stars at the hardest courts in town.

Over the past two weeks, the U.S. Open put any number of pampered athletes in our midst—though "in our midst" might be an overstatement when they're shuttled by limo from midtown suites to swank restaurants and escorted from air-conditioned locker rooms to the enclosed practice courts at the U.S. Tennis Center in Flushing, where fans can get a peek at their seeded heroes only by pushing through the shrubbery and eyeballing a gap in the windscreens. So why, this year, did Pete Sampras sneak down to the Brian Watkins Tennis Center courts on the East River just south of Houston Street to pound serves with his hitting partner? It's the equivalent of Michael Jordan's turning up at the cage at West 4th Street to practice free throws.

But maybe Sampras was just displaying the same savvy that has helped him capture more Grand Slam singles titles than any guy who ever touched a racket: Where better to prepare for the tour's most notoriously distracting tournament—from the flight-path locale to the historically boorish fans—than down in Loisaida? Just outside the rest rooms, the Hispanic evangelists blare salvation through a massive P.A. system in Spanish and English to a crowd of mothers and children from the Bernard Baruch Houses. Pancho, the resident rooster, stalks about the court entrance, jabbing at a bowl of spaghetti mixed with cat food. A band of urchins swoops in on skates and circles the courts, poaching balls from the unsuspecting.



You can play the same people here for years without knowing their names: The older Chinese guy who slices all his shots, dropping everything maddeningly out of reach. The young woman with the gray hair who always plays the guy who covers all his tattoos in zinc oxide. The Samoan fellow who plays in blue jeans. The tall, bald, shirtless black man in aviator shades whose service motion uncoils as slowly as t'ai chi yet produces a flat, nearly untouchable missile. With that perverse pride particular to New Yorkers, these acolytes thrive on distractions that would send most club players home in tears. The ambient noise level is just shy of punishing. With the roar of the FDR feet away on one side, the cigarette boats churning up and down the East River on the other, and the cacophony of the Williamsburg Bridge vaulting overhead—its traffic washed out by a peculiar high-pitched shriek associated with construction slated to last another four years—even the most ardently shouted scores are lost in the mix.

The players are equally undeterred by the aberrant aromatics, from the exhaust of the FDR and the garbage barges wafting by to the raw sewage escaping from the manhole cover on Court 11. Even full-on projectile assaults merit only a raised eyebrow; the vintage-poster dealer with the bum elbow likes to recall the hubcap that came flying onto the court from the bridge above, nearly decapitating his opponent. I've been pelted with rocks and bottles hurled over the windscreen in mid-match by the idle delinquents prowling East River Park, and, once, almost beaten up for asking some picnicking revelers to turn their boom box down just a couple hundred decibels. The Newport Lawn Club it decidedly isn't.

We know that most of the country would laugh at—indeed, would pave over—our idea of a place to "get in the game," in the USTA's parlance. But looking up from the drubbing I'm taking from the Chinese nephrologist who pummels the ball in perfect inverse proportion to his slight stature and affable nature, I can't help being cheered by the sunlight lingering like rust on the girders of the span above. The DOMINO SUGAR sign lights up across the river, where the hubris of the Open unfolds. Right here, however, a train is squealing overhead and a shouting match is erupting on the next court—the kind of cross-training that even Sampras, it seems, would dodge a few rocks for.

TOBY CECCHINI

BRAND X

War Zone

BRAND: *Intrepid* Sea-Air-Space Museum **AGENCY:** DDB Worldwide (NY) **CREATIVE DIRECTORS:** Dan Cohen and Billy Faraut

COME SEE WHA
17-YEAR-OLDS
BEFORE PLAYS

In post-Cold War peacetime, war can be hell to sell. Faced with an American cultural climate that's hostile to strife, the *Intrepid* Sea-Air-Space Museum has embarked on a new outdoor (bus and subway) campaign that sells battle nostalgia with graceful little dollops of guilt. One shot of the storied carrier is headlined IT SURVIVED DIVE-BOMBERS, TORPEDOES AND KAMIKAZES TO GET HERE. SURELY YOU CAN CROSS THE WEST SIDE HIGHWAY. Another ad reads 50 YEARS AGO, SHE SAVED YOUR FREEDOM. TODAY SHE'LL SAVE YOU FROM A BORING SUNDAY. And most pointedly, a vintage shot of a pilot manning a machine gun is headlined COME SEE WHAT 17-YEAR-OLDS DID BEFORE PLAYSTATION. The ads take a page right out of Tom Brokaw's patriotism playbook (i.e., his best-selling *The Greatest Generation*). The message: We pretty much suck. Our grandparents, on the other hand, not only *didn't* suck, they saved the world. In this moment of sole-superpower self-satisfaction and complacency, you don't have to scratch far below the surface of the American psyche to tap into a rich vein of late-bull-economy self-loathing. Our idea of conflict—Susan vs. Kelly on *Survivor*, 'N Sync vs. Backstreet Boys, George W. Bush vs. that "asshole" *Times*man—feels staggeringly insubstantial. Collectively, we're feeling *faux* battle fatigue; the *Intrepid* wants you to know that for $12, you can vicariously experience the real thing.

SIMON DUMENCO

Photograph: left, Matthew Salacuse.

GOTHAM REALESTATE

REALTY BITES

Nobody's Homes

Will cyber pioneer get run out of town?

DANIEL LEVY, PRESIDENT OF CITY-Realty.com, says he simply wanted to set up a Website to get rid of "inefficiencies" in the market by allowing buyers to search through listings, and brokers to search through buyer requests. But other brokers are doing whatever they can to crash his start-up. "You can do most of the transaction online," he explains, fiddling with the site on a laptop in the dim stateliness of the conference room in his Trump Tower offices. Almost six years ago, Levy got the idea of bringing New York real estate to the Web after working on AT&T's interactive TV venture. "He was the first person who came to pitch us on the Internet," recalls Corcoran chief marketing officer Anita Perrone. Brokers tried it out, and he started NYRealty.com—"basically a souped-up listings site," he says—in 1994. Earlier this year, Goldman Sachs backed him in a plan that would make him an online broker—and put him in competition with his brick-and-mortar listings sources. That scared Douglas Elliman, which announced last month that it was teaming up with Corcoran to launch a Net-based Multiple Listings Service (upsetting Brown Harris Stevens, which rallied dozens of other brokerages to get together and start their own MLS). Levy says "there are tremendous benefits" for brokers to work with him, but they seem unconvinced. Most aren't giving Levy their listings. "Why would we outsource an MLS when we have the inventory?" asks Perrone. But Levy says he's launching September 11 anyway, with listings that are "public information." At least one large broker in town plans to block him from taking listings from its site—"legally if we have to." C.S.

Mort's $9 Million Nursery

Daily News publisher Zuckerman buys a townhouse near his home.

BROKERS SAY THAT *DAILY NEWS* PUBLISHer Mortimer Zuckerman didn't want to be too far from his young daughter, Abigail, after he and his wife, Marla Prather, separated this summer. So he's doing what any sensitive, concerned billionaire would do: buying a $9.4 million townhouse for his wife just a toddle away from his triplex on Fifth Avenue in the seventies. (The deal hasn't closed yet.) The new place was previously owned by Pia Zadora, who renovated with architect Peter Marino (adding a $1 million black marble staircase) but sold it in 1995 without moving in. It's within walking distance of the Whitney Museum of American Art, where Prather works as the curator of postwar art. She met Zuckerman in the spring of 1996 at a dinner at the Smithsonian, where she then worked, and he wooed her with flowers and funny cards. They were married by that fall, and Prather moved north last October to take her Whitney job. The seller was ex–J.P. Morgan vice-chairman Roberto Mendoza, who moved to London to be managing director of the Goldman Sachs office there. Zuckerman's office had no comment.
CARL SWANSON

BIG DEALS

Financial District

25 Ann Street

Two-bedroom, two-bath, 2,300-square-foot condominium loft. Asking: $998,000. Selling: $988,000. Time on market: three and a half weeks.

EDGAR ALLAN POE IS SAID TO have worked for the New York *Mirror* when the paper's headquarters were on this site, though its offices burned down around 1900. So in an effort to lure loft buyers east from TriBeCa, the converters, Milas LLC, have renamed the successor building "Edgar House." Even without casks of Amontillado behind the walls (there are Viking stoves in the kitchens, however), the gambit seems to have worked: Halstead's Joyce Spiegel, who sold this apartment, notes that everything except the penthouse has been taken. The 1923 structure that replaced the *Mirror* offices was built for sporting-goods-maker A.G. Spalding (creator of the Spaldeen, the only correct item with which to play stickball), so any annoying heartbeats under the floorboards are the resident's own damn fault.

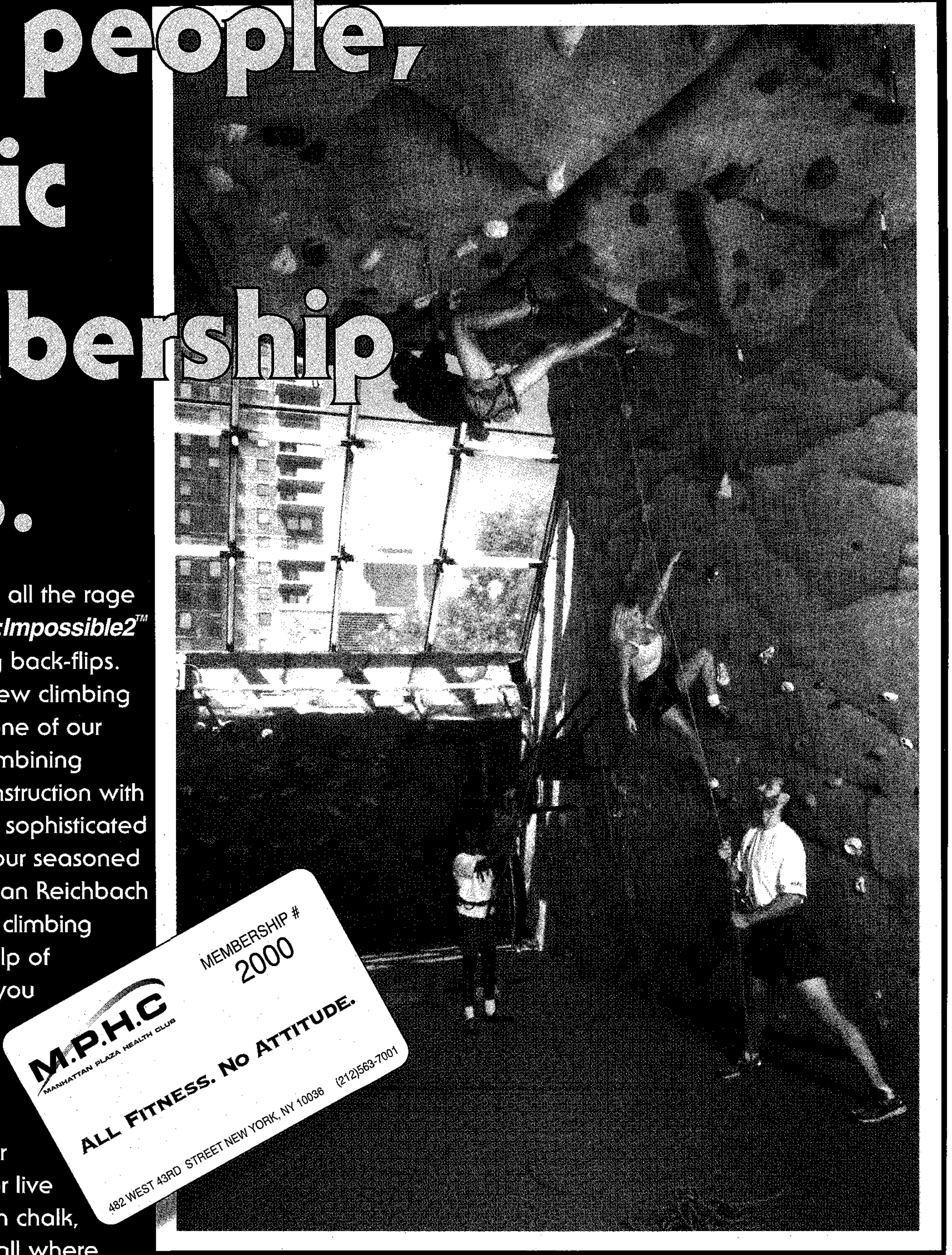
A newsroom nevermore: 25 Ann Street.

Upper East Side

8 East 80th Street

10,600-square-foot townhouse. Asking: $9.9 million. Selling: $10 million. Time on market: five years.

BLAME THE CONTRACTOR FOR the half-decade delay in selling this immaculate townhouse: Its owners were renovating their new home, and every time they got an offer, it wasn't ready. (They'd bump up the price each time to fend off potential buyers.) This time, they were ready, though, and a couple who'd sold their tech company and were relocating from the West Coast thought they had a deal with an offer of $9.5 million. Then someone swept in and offered more. Douglas Elliman broker Marilyn Presser, who had both sides of the original deal, intervened, calling the owners to ask, "What would it take? Everyone has a price—name a price." The owner said $10 million; she called the couple, who slept on it and then paid up. CHRISTOPHER BONANOS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ED KOCH VS. AL D'AMATO I'M RIGHT, YOU'RE WRONG

New York's pugilistic politicos on Bush's slide, Hillary's rising tide, and W. as media critic.

OFF DUTY
TAXI
OFF DUTY

Maer Roshan: *Bush took a few lumps this week for indiscreetly calling the* Times' *Adam Clymer an asshole. I'm sure you guys would never speak ill of a journalist.*

Ed Koch: The whole thing is ridiculous. I personally have said much worse. It's not like Bush called him a *fucking* asshole. [*Laughs.*]

Al D'Amato: Let's face it—there isn't one of us in politics who hasn't denigrated reporters. Who can blame us? Sometimes it's hard to believe how dishonest and prejudiced the Fourth Estate can be!

Ed: I completely agree. Some reporters *are* assholes.

M.R.: *Seems to me a journalist isn't doing his job if he isn't called an asshole by a politician at least once.* [Laughter.] *The other big issue of the week was Bush's announcement that he'll accept only one of the three official commission debates.*

Al: What a horrible mistake. The American people have a right to see Bush in action! If he wants to insist on those two other debates with NBC and CNN, that's his right. But he cannot, without doing political harm to himself, duck out on the commission debates. His advisers are giving him bad advice.

Ed: I agree. Gore has the high road on this one. And ultimately, Bush will be dragged along until he caves.

Al: We're talking about a very close race. If a candidate is perceived as being fearful of appearing before the American people, it's going to hurt him. And in this case it could cost Bush the election.

M.R.: *Last Monday's* Daily News *featured the headline* IT'S GORE'S TO LOSE.

Al: Not quite. According to the polls, right now Gore and Bush would each get 150-plus delegates in the Electoral College. This race will be fought in just a handful of battle states where the candidates are within seven or eight points of each other. Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Missouri, Georgia, and Florida will determine who becomes the next president.

Ed: But even the *Post* had to admit that historically, whoever's ahead in the popular vote on Labor Day wins, and Gore is now ahead.

M.R.: *How did Gore turn things around? A few weeks ago, you were both going on about how boring and ineffectual he was.*

Al: Well, he *was* boring. But since the conventions, while W. was resting in Texas, Gore was out there pounding the pavement, talking up his programs, and taking shots at Bush. You've got to be on the attack! Bush needs to get out there. If he's got a message, let the people hear it.

Ed: The problem is, he *has* no message.

Al: No, Ed, he *does* have a message. When the public saw him, they liked him. But then he retreated.

M.R.: *Why? Did he get cocky?*

Al: I think that's part of it. I also think Bush really distrusts the media, which is unfortunate. As negative as he may perceive them, they are the only vehicle by which you see the candidate on TV, other than paid ads. He needs to reach out and take some risks.

Ed: The bottom line is that Republicans thought they had an easy win. But Democrats traditionally have the better of the issues, whether it's taxes, Social Security, or health care. When you have these stupid Republicans fighting an increase in the minimum wage, you say to yourself, "Keep it up, fellas."

M.R.: *People once predicted the New York Senate race would overshadow the presidential campaign, but these days the candidates have been reduced to debating which of them likes sausage more.*

Ed: It's obvious to me that the heart has gone out of the Lazio campaign, and I'm shocked. He's unconsciously thrown in the towel.

Al: Listen, people are tired of the both of them! This whole kielbasa battle is ridiculous. What are they running for? Prom king and homecoming queen? I mean, give me a break! This is painful! People have great reservations about both Hillary and Lazio. We are entitled to a series of serious debates instead of what we're getting.

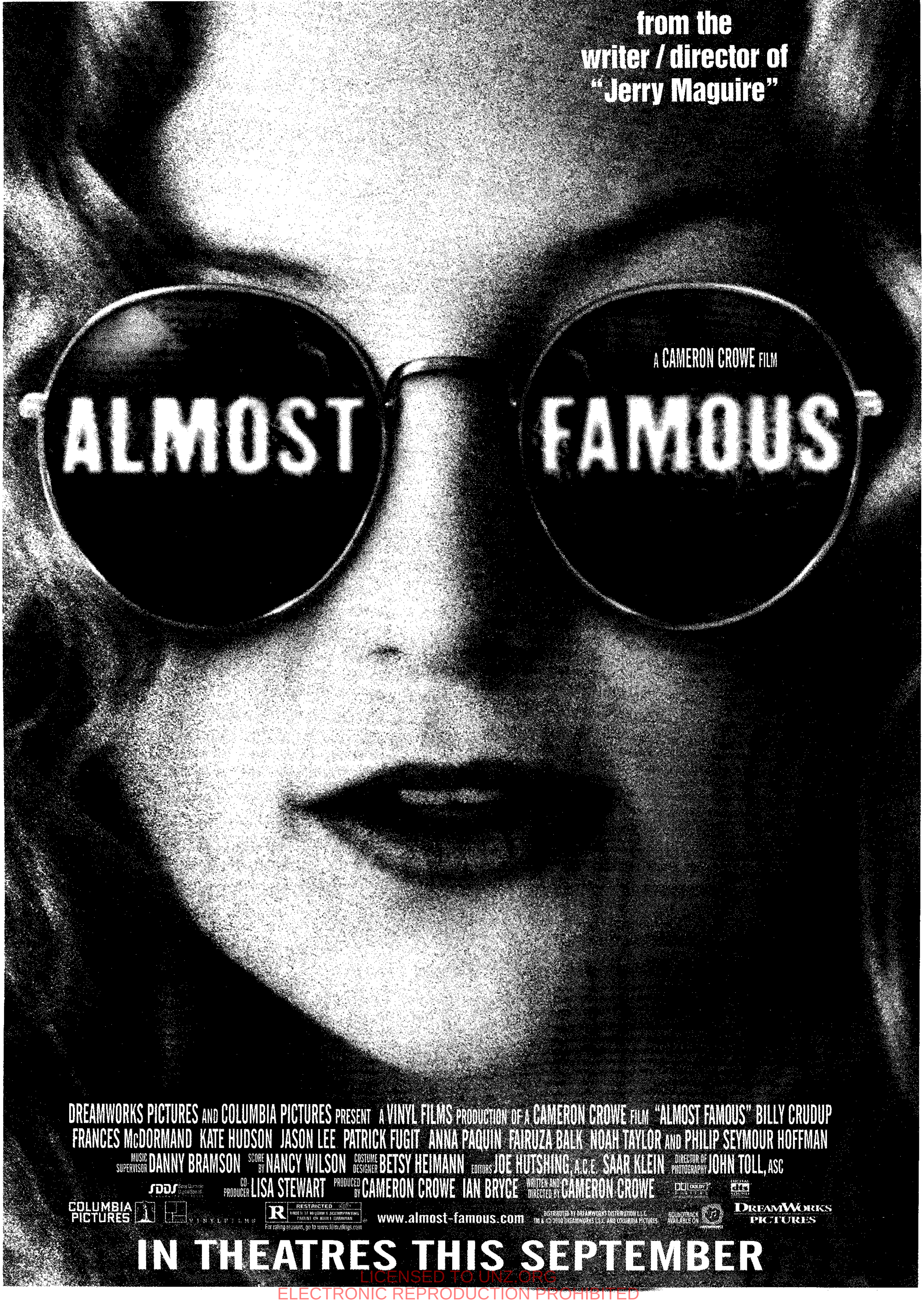
Ed: I agree. But here's my prediction. The Democrats are going to carry both houses. Hillary will carry New York, and Gore will carry the presidency. It'll be a clean sweep. And you heard it here first.

M.R.: *Care to second that?*

Al: At one time, I'd have said Ed Koch was taking a fantasy drug—a Democratic Ecstasy. Now I'd say that his predictions may not be pie in the sky. Republicans have a good chance of retaining the Senate, but the New York Senate race is dead even, which I *never* would have predicted. I always thought Rick held an advantage. It's now a dead-even race, but Rick can still win it. And yes, George Bush has a lot of work to do, but the race is far from over. ▬

Al D'Amato is a columnist at *George*. Ed Koch is a columnist at *Newsday*.

Illustration by S. B. Whitehead.



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IN THEATRES THIS SEPTEMBER

THE SCENE

Choo Fetish

Photographs by Patrick McMullan

ALL EYES WERE ON THE GROUND AT THE SEPTEMBER 3 JIMMY Choo dinner hosted in Southampton by company managing director Tamara Mellon and her husband, Matthew. "I was a bit nervous about hosting a party for all these people I don't know," admitted Choo design director Sandra Choi. "But this is really fun." That's because the party turned into a love-in between the chic young British women who produce the stilettos and the well-heeled Americans who pay upward of $300 a pair to wear them. Hamptons regulars Alexandra and Elizabeth Lind, Cristina Greeven, and Kadee Robbins sipped cocktails with editors from *Vogue, InStyle,* and *Town & Country,* cooing over one another's diamanté mules, glittery slingbacks, and dainty python thong sandals—while Damian Loeb, Moby, and a smattering of bewildered male dates looked on. "They're the greatest shoes of all time!" gushed *Marie Claire*'s Lucy Sykes, throwing her arms around Mellon and Choi. As the girls took their places for a buffet clambake dinner, they discovered Swarovski crystal tattoos at each setting and gleefully set about applying them between bites of lobster and corn, distracted only by the late arrival of one unfortunate partygoer who appeared in a pair of very un-Choo clunky sandals and begged, "Don't look down!" SHYAMA PATEL

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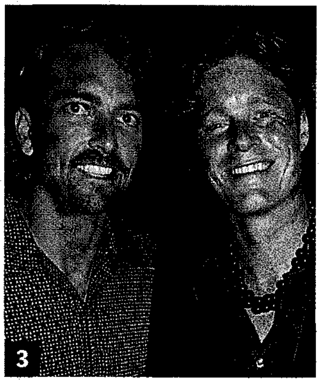
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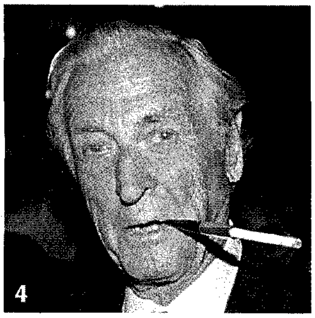
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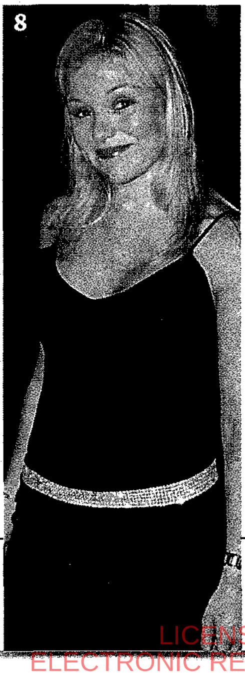
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1. Tamara and Matthew Mellon at the Jimmy Choo dinner. 2. Leonor Varela, Marklen Kennedy, and Jennifer Grant at the Tisch School of the Arts benefit dinner at Ann and Keith Barish's home. 3. Goran Ivanisevic and Geoff Grant at the screening of Grant and Mark Keil's documentary *Beyond the Baseline* at the Tribeca Grand Hotel. 4. Ridgely Harrison at the Meadow Club for a cocktail party celebrating his marriage to Mai Hallingby. 5. Dr. William Manger, HRH Princess Michael of Kent, HRH Prince Michael of Kent, and Lynn Manger at the Mangers' home for a BestSelections.com dinner in honor of the prince and princess. 6. Jessica Meisels, Andrew Levitas, and Lisa Ling at Conscience Point for their birthday party. 7. Sheila and Tom Wolfe at the Hampton Classic Horse Show. 8. Casey Johnson at a dinner at Marcie and Michael Warren's Watermill home. 9. Jamie Gregory and Jacques Levitan at Levitan's home for a Labor Day cocktail party.

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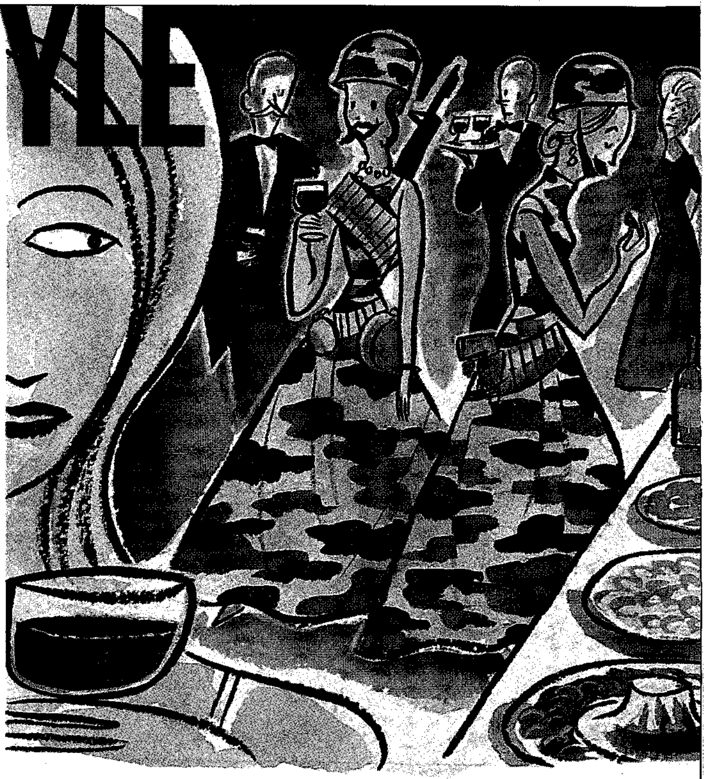
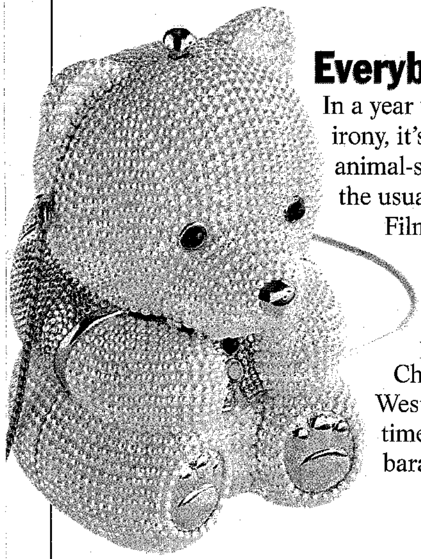


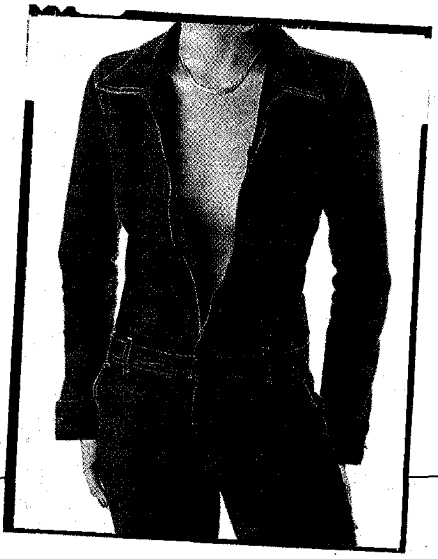
Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

After seasons of doing brisk T-shirt business at Army-Navy surplus stores and Canal Street vendors, camouflage is storming the more stylish outposts of Manhattan. Christine Ganeaux is offering an ROTC-inspired suit for fall in army green, brown, and black (pants, $260; blazer, $378) at her Crosby Street shop. A few storefronts away at M Z Wallace, duffel bags and purses ($140–$225) come in the military motif with leather trim. Dior designer John Galliano—who favors torn-up combat pants as his own uniform—scissored out a camouflage ball gown in taffeta for his spring 2001 couture collection ($6,740). Even Burberry is headed for boot camp, with a new line of camouflage-patterned bags, hats, and shoes in the house's signature red, tan, and brown colors. "Hey," says a company spokesperson, justifying the military takeover of Burberry's traditional tartan, "you can only do so much plaid." MONICA ROY



Everybody Must Get Stoned

In a year when *Dynasty* is being invoked without a hint of irony, it's no surprise to see Judith Leiber's jewel-encrusted animal-shaped bags dangling from shoulders—though not the usual padded ones. Björk cavorted around the Cannes Film Festival with a Leiber penguin positioned on her hip; Jeremy Scott wore a glistening honey bear (pictured; $3,750) to the American Fashion Awards. Italian *Vogue* and *Nylon* have incorporated the pricey purses into fall-fashion photo ops, and by Christmas, a silver seal, a black Scottie, and a white Westie will be introduced into the Leiber lexicon. Just in time for the return of Nancy Reagan's red suits and Barbara Bush's pearls. KRISTINA RICHARDS



Suit Yourself

Farrah Fawcett's feathered hair is not the only *Charlie's Angels*–inspired trend to land on fashion's leggy leaders: The denim jumpsuit is also back in fashion. Earl Jean (pictured; $195), Frankie B ($168), and Bruce ($400) have all stretched their denim looms a few feet for fall. Besides being mindless—will matching separates soon be a thing of the past?—the jumpsuit is sexy: These zippers go so low, Erica Jong may rethink her take on the zipless fuck. K.R.

SHOP TALK

Chanel cultists intent on adding more bouclé-wool suits and chain-strap quilted bags to their wardrobes might be strategically rescheduling their fall weekend itineraries from the Hamptons to the Hudson Valley, where the first-ever Chanel outlet is set to open during Fashion Week at Woodbury Common (914-928-4000). Japanese tourists, the mall's most diligent bargain hunters, who religiously scour the racks of Versace and Gucci, will have to contend with sample-sale-trained fashion editors who normally have no use for outlets—what good are last year's Prada lip prints *this* season?—but who can never have too many of Chanel's evergreen ensembles. But even if the opening is perfectly timed for the return of greed-is-good glamour, we can't help but wonder what Coco (pictured) would say about that decidedly discount address. Is there *any* chic way to ride the Short Line from Port Authority?

SARAH BERNARD

Photographs: clockwise from right, Archive Photos; Dasha Wright Ewing (2). Illustration by Marcellus Hall.

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THE NATIONAL INTEREST LAWRENCE O'DONNELL JR.

Open-Mike Nightmare

In a presidential contest so close there's no room for mistakes, Dubya made a "major league" error. It gave Gore the lead—and may send George back to the Bush leagues.

'THERE'S ADAM CLYMER, major-league asshole from the New York *Times.*"

"Oh, yeah. He is. Big-time."

And so, on Labor Day 2000, in Naperville, Illinois, George W. Bush's quest for the White House came to an end. It wasn't much as presidential-campaign turning points go: a two-line exchange between running mates that had nothing to do with the governance of the United States, a two-line exchange that no one ever would have heard were it not for the most dangerous tool in politics—the open mike. But on the most important day of the campaign, that two-line exchange was all Al Gore and Joe Lieberman needed to solidify their post-convention surge in the polls and lock up the election. It's over.

In modern presidential campaigns, the candidate in the lead on Labor Day always wins, and Bush and Gore woke that morning tied in most polls. In a race so close, there's no room for mistakes—but the very first thing Bush did that day was make a big one. It didn't seem like a big deal at first, and I didn't think much of it when I got an urgent cell-phone call telling me what Bush had got caught saying. Was anyone actually naïve enough to think that politicians don't talk about reporters in such terms every day, that Bill Clinton hasn't made such comments about at least a few *Times* staffers? When I worked in the Senate and Adam Clymer was the *Times'* congressional correspondent, I heard many Republicans, as well as some Democrats, say that sort of thing about him all the time. Bush's comment was actually one of the cleanest versions I've heard.

Most pundits were quick to point out that criticizing a reporter wasn't likely to get Bush into too much trouble with a public that doesn't hold the media in very high regard. But the specifics of what he said don't matter at all. He didn't say anything racist, sexist, or homophobic. He didn't get caught saying something provably wrong about something important. He got caught using a word most voters use on a regular basis about someone most voters surely could have guessed he didn't like.

THE CLYMER INCIDENT WAS THE FINAL turning point of the campaign because the message the public took from the two-day cycle of the story—not so much in newspapers, which mostly buried it, but from the constant rolling and rerolling of the videotape—was that Bush blundered. And he blundered, to borrow a phrase, big-time. Big-time enough to lead the network newscasts. And blundering was the one thing Bush could not afford to be caught doing.

There was already a suspicion that Bush is a blunderer. He'd already had more than his share of malapropisms and awkward moments, beginning, way back before the New Hampshire primary, when he failed a videotaped quiz on the names of foreign heads of state. Never mind that most of the candidates in the field then would have failed it, that most of us in the media would have failed it. In a very close campaign, nothing matters more than luck, and the distribution of luck is never fair. Late in a close campaign, when that very small, very skittish group of short-attention-span types called undecided voters is finally focusing on the election, it can make them wonder if a candidate knows what he's doing. Bob Abrams would probably be a United States Senator today if he hadn't muttered the word *fascist* when he had run out of other adjectives to describe Al D'Amato in the final stretch of the 1992 New York Senate campaign.

In the aftermath of the open-mike gaffe, the notion that Bush is in over his head could suddenly make perfect sense to those undecided voters. And now that they were paying attention, Bush was desperately attempting to set up single-network talk-show alternatives to full-blown multinetwork debates. He couldn't have looked more afraid of debating Gore, and his operatives were surprised to discover that Gore's repeated pledge to debate "anywhere, anytime" couldn't be dragged back to haunt Gore when they came up with their too-cute strategy of trying to turn their debate avoidance into proof that Gore can't be trusted. The Bush debate proposal was so obviously designed to get Gore to break his word that Gore paid no price with editorial writers or voters by immediately turning down the plan.

Then, just as Bush was losing the debate about the debates, he rushed out a proposal for a prescription-drug benefit for Medicare that he should have, and could have, introduced months ago—essentially the same proposal

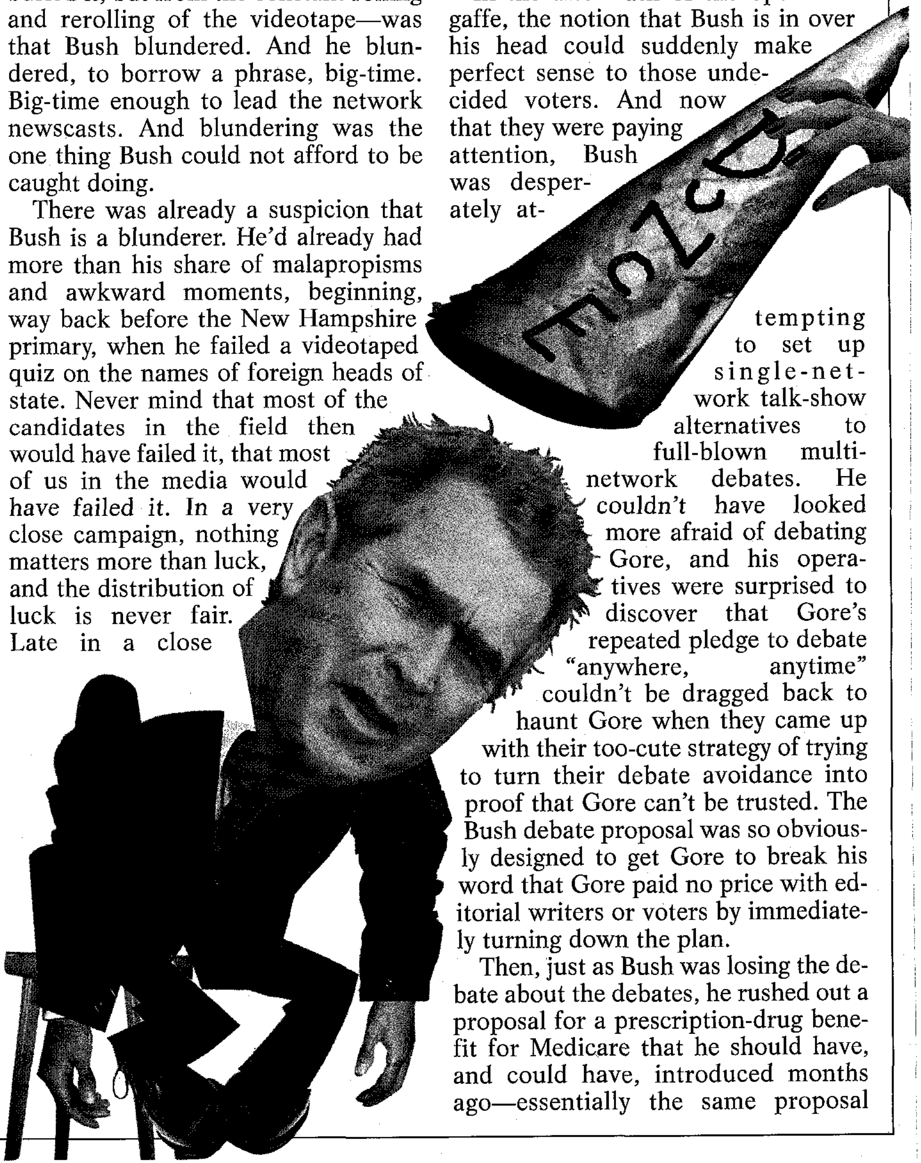


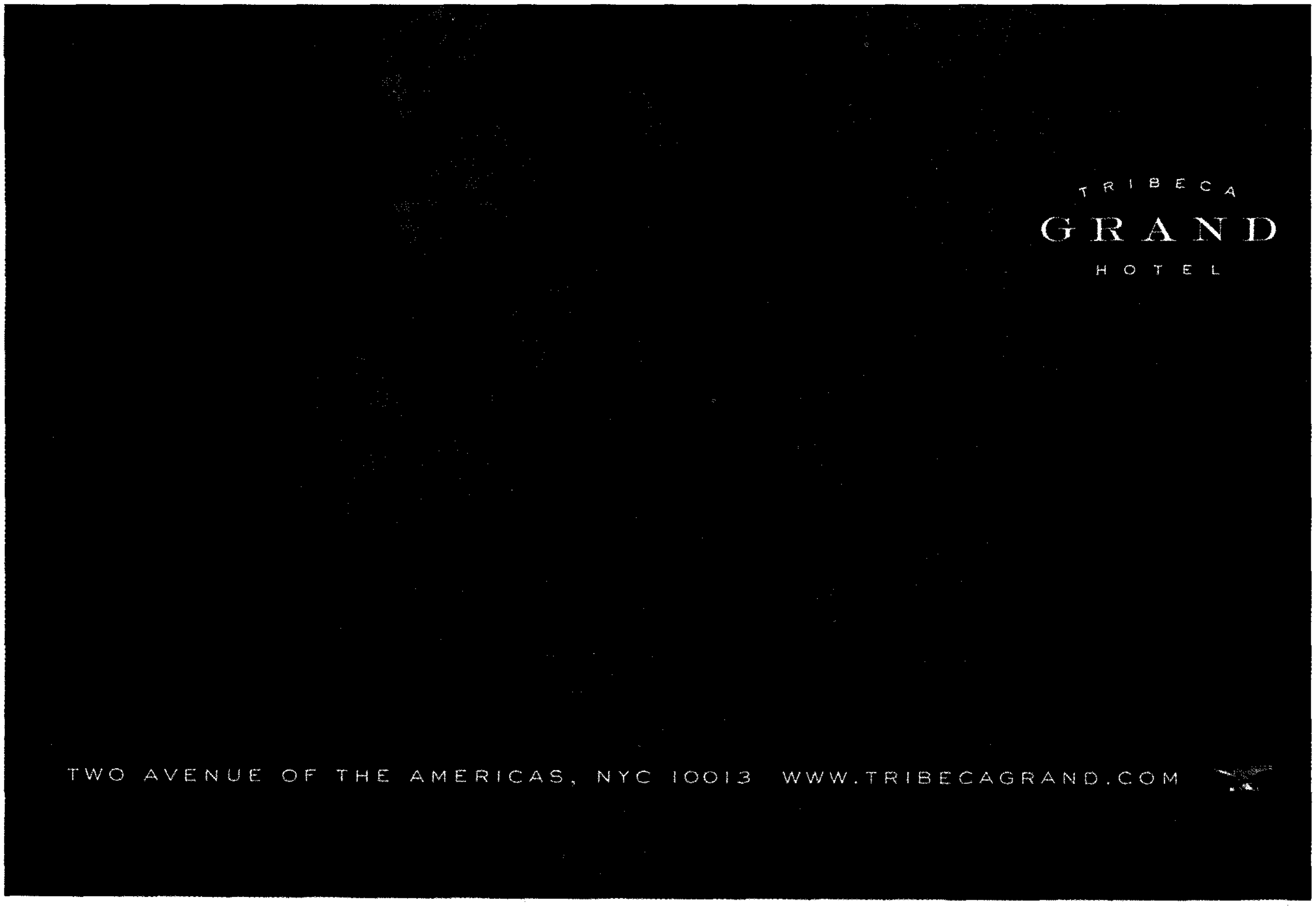
Illustration by Stephen Kroninger; photograph (Bush) by AP/Wide World Photos.

that Democratic senator John Breaux cobbled together with Republican Bill Frist and bipartisan support two years ago. Waiting until the week of Labor Day left him looking like he was merely offering a counterproposal to Gore's popular, and more generous, plan. Then, when Gore handed out an impressive-looking book detailing his budget plan, Bush offered only unconvincing assurances that his big tax cut was going to be just great for everyone, not only the rich.

BY THE END OF THE WEEK, WHEN REPUBLICAN insiders knew how much the open-mike mistake had done to cement Bush's image as a blunderer, they started airing their complaints about his campaign in the New York *Times*, not exactly their favorite newspaper. This is standard operating procedure not when party operatives think your campaign is in trouble but when they think it's dead. (When they think you're in trouble, they offer you advice privately; when they think you're dead, they go public with all the great advice you ignored privately.) All their complaints referred to choices made before the Clymer incident—from putting Cheney on the ticket to buying TV ads attacking Gore—but they were only dug up by reporters after it happened. The insiders know there's nothing for them to save but their reputations.

> *"By the end of the week, Republican insiders were* **airing their complaints about Bush's campaign** *in the* Times*—standard operating procedure not when party operatives think your campaign is in trouble but when they think it's dead."*

There was a lot of guessing about what this election was going to be about: impeachment, Clinton fatigue, campaign-finance reform, the economy. Now it's about Bush's competence: Is he up to the job? With such a thin résumé in government—one and a half terms as governor of Texas—Bush can convince voters of his competence only by demonstrating a flawless policy fluency in the debates. Which won't happen, even if the debates do. Instead, Gore will keep droning on about his policy positions, knowing that he sounds as boring as ever, but also as competent. Bush will keep talking about restoring honor and integrity to the White House, which has nothing to do with what this election is now about. When he does talk policy, he'll be on the defensive, responding to Gore instead of taking the lead on issues. The more Bush has to talk about policy, the more incompetent he'll sound. So as the campaign heads into the fall—and passes the point at which no recent front-runner has faced an upset—Bush must choose between talking about honor and sounding irrelevant or talking about policy and sounding incompetent. In other words, it's over. ▬



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MEDIA MICHAEL WOLFF

Boys to Men

Men's mags were once for—and edited by—men of consequence. Then came the beer-and-babes revolution. Can 'Details' make men and magazines matter again?

DETAILS IS A MAGAZINE THAT has gone through numerous makeovers during the past decade (what one editor characterized as "the long, horrific struggle") in an effort to create a sexy, stylish, provocative, culturally important, and profitable magazine for men. None of these efforts was successful enough not to be thrown out and started all over again. Six months ago, after the failure of its last makeover, an attempt to imitate the British beer-and-babes import *Maxim* (known in the trade as a "lad" magazine), *Details* was shut down and its staff fired or transferred within Condé Nast, its parent company. Still, with an uncharacteristic corporate stubbornness, the company did not allow the magazine to die. Rather, its corpus was moved from Condé Nast to Fairchild, the recently acquired Condé Nast sister company, where, it was shortly announced, the process would recommence. The sixth editor in ten years was named and charged with creating a magazine—on sale this week—that will once again try to define male sensibility and aspirations, that certain upwardly mobile kind of masculinity.

Which prompts such questions as, Why would a company, a company principally devoted to women's magazines at that, continue to compound its repeated failures to create such a men's magazine? Why such insistence? Why this pursuit? This quixoticness? What is to be gained? Or proved?

It is unlikely that such Sisyphean efforts can just be about making money. Indeed, it is most likely that ever more money will be lost. Also, the accepted moneymaking formula—evident not just in *Maxim* but in the British lad magazine *FHM*, which recently launched here, and in the most successful of the British lad titles, *Loaded*—was distasteful enough for Condé Nast that after *Details'* brief flirtation with this lower end of men's-magazine sensibility, the company decided to junk everything but the magazine's name.

I think it's a pride thing. Much of Condé Nast's management has been personally involved, after all, in trying to get *Details* to succeed. But perhaps even more nagging, if you are a man in the magazine business, then at one time or another you have most likely thought, possibly obsessively, certainly enviously, about making your own men's magazine—of having that kind of influence, that kind of cultural meaning. It's hard to give up on this, hard to give up on wanting to get it right.

Fashion victim: Michael VerMeulen in better days at British *GQ*.

If you are indeed a man and a magazine professional, you should be able to make a magazine as meaningful and as influential as the magazines you grew up on—*Esquire, Playboy, Rolling Stone,* and, indubitably, *Mad.* Si Newhouse may run the world's most influential women's magazines, but he did not grow up reading them.

Men's magazines are not like women's magazines (I remember when women used to ask, *Why isn't there an* Esquire *for women?*). They command a different kind of loyalty: We (at least we in the magazine business) don't seem to outgrow them; they, the magazines in memory, remain more sophisticated than we'll ever be.

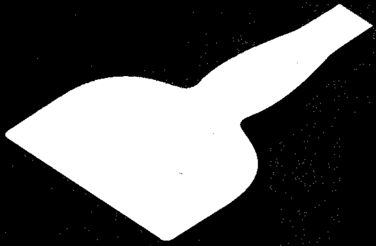
I know editors who have built collections—guarding them jealously—of the large-format *Esquires* from the sixties. In Los Angeles, at the Democratic Convention, the magazine writer Eric Alterman was describing to a group of (male) journalists the party he'd attended at the Playboy Mansion, which, shortly, became a tell-us-tell-us discussion about the famous Playboy Mansion Grotto, which, I think, stands not so much for a certain order of hedonistic life as for a certain sort of idealized magazine life—when you might have met all sorts of writers swimming in Hef's pool. There is about the men's magazine, or the myth of the men's magazine, a nostalgic affection for writing. Writing as a manly activity.

Which is not, of course, to underestimate the sex thing. For the kind of man who might be interested in creating a men's magazine, there is nothing more erotic than sex in a magazine. Video or Internet sex doesn't compare.

I have known many men who have attempted to rejuvenate existing men's magazines or who have attempted to start new ones. They have all been, in greater or lesser ways, frustrated or wounded by the experience. It is not

Photograph by Sean Smith/Guardian.

THE NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL



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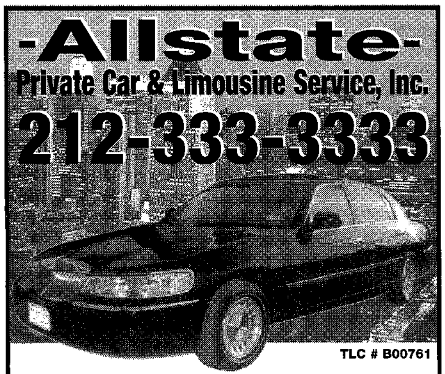

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just, I think, because creating a men's magazine involves an unattainable and conflicted view of masculinity (although we should not underestimate this either) but, even more complexly, because it involves an unattainably perfect ideal of magazines—profitable and literary.

Now the advent of a new generation of men's magazines, the gross and obvious kind (*Maxim* has a circulation of near 2 million), as well as the one-note men's magazines, the health books or fitness titles or adventure or fashion guides, makes the reinvention of the smart and influential (sexy and snobby and funny and stylish and literate) kind all the more pressing an issue. What would it take to do this right?

TEN YEARS AGO, I WAS HAVING THE DIScussion about American men's magazines with Michael VerMeulen, the defining editor of British *GQ*, possibly the closest living equivalent to this mythic men's magazine (British *GQ* bears very little resemblance to American *GQ*). Although many British journalists of my acquaintance verge on the dissolute—sloppy drunks trying to cadge a free meal—Michael, an American who was shortly to become an English legend, outdid them all. Wearing a loud rumpled shirt (he seemed to choose for himself American or British character traits depending on which was the most obnoxious or extreme), not thin but not nearly as fat as he was about to become, his hands shaking from a previous long night on the town, he was then just a features editor at British *GQ*—at that time a not-very-successful imitator of the fashion and male-grooming aspects of its American cousin.

VerMeulen was steeped in the lore of a prior generation of American magazines. He claimed in fact to have had a kind of sixties-style journalist's career in the U.S. (although this was 1990 and he was 33), to have even, he said, passed as a member of the Ku Klux Klan for *Rolling Stone* (this was hard even for the English to believe). But it was *Esquire*-in-the-sixties, a magazine that he was not old enough to pretend to have written for, that most of all was the focus of his obsession. His was a deeply romanticized notion of not only what magazines could be but what a person working on such a magazine should be. A men's magazine should not be a reflection of what we think men want to read but should be, he said with high romanticism, a reflection of the life the editor leads. The *life*. If it was an interesting life, then the magazine would be interesting.

I found this all to be expat-ish and quaint. Indeed, he was in London, he said, because all the best talent in England had been exported to New York, giving him, he figured, a better chance there than here (just at this moment, James Truman, the British journalist, was revamping *Details* in New York).

Still, I was surprised when, in fact, in 1992, he got the chance to take over British *GQ*. *How did the Brits fall for this?* I wondered.

But all of a sudden, there on international newsstands, was something close to one's mind's-eye idea of a men's magazine. It was rude and serious, flip and earnest, left-wing and acquisitive, drunk and sober, of high and low disposition, respectable and kinky, with a rigorous discipline of providing what VerMeulen characterized as "neat shit to buy." He also put all the good writers he knew to work. And it was dirty—funny dirty, teasy dirty. Sex as an editorial act.

> *"The advent of a new generation of men's magazines, the gross and obvious kind, as well as the one-note men's magazines, makes the reinvention of the smart and influential* **(sexy and snobby and funny and stylish and literate)** *kind all the more pressing an issue."*

It was, the Brits said admiringly, very American. On the other hand, it was also the Groucho Club—that very English establishment of journalists and alcohol and, as they say in London, "lovely ladies," where Michael spent a large part of every day—come to life.

It was high energy. Manic. It was Michael's life.

Almost overnight, it was a success. VerMeulen became an English sensation. He reversed Tina Brown.

Peter Preston theorized in the *Guardian* that VerMeulen's instinct was to turn on its ear the notion that journalism was "a pseudo-posh, stolidly respectable profession." It was for Ver-

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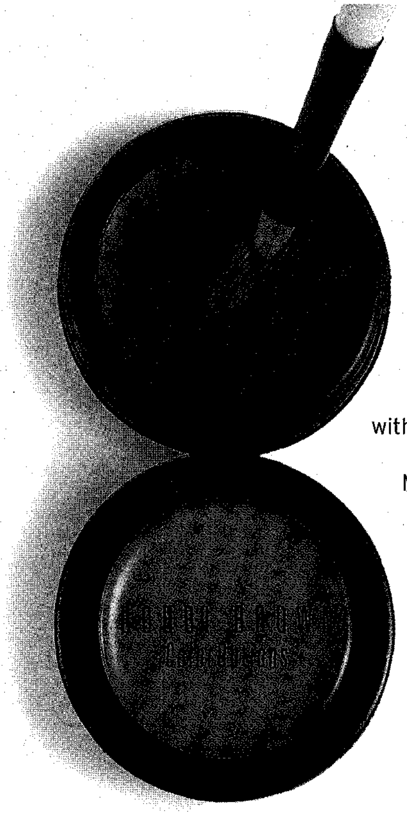

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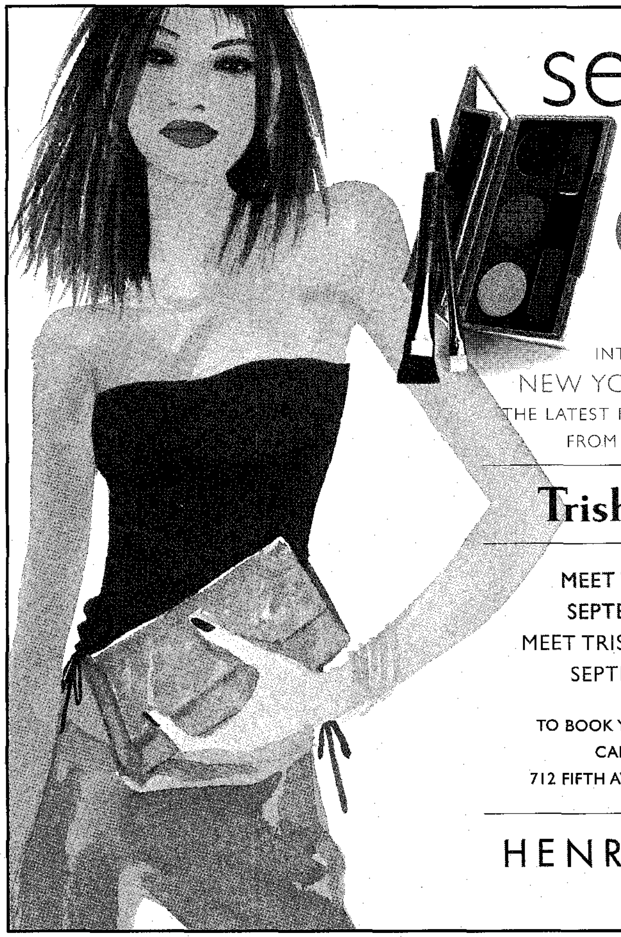

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HENRI BENDEL
NEW YORK

Meulen, says Preston, "very rough trade."

Fat, alcoholic, loud, louche, drug-addicted, a connoisseur of English prostitutes (I declined to accompany him one night), he became the model man for the next generation of men's magazines. He was, with just a little critical interpretation, if you took away the snarkiness and the snobbishness and the anarcho tendencies, if you ignored the fact that he was also a good editor who was fond of good writers, a maximum lad.

Still, no matter his personal idiosyncrasies, what he did worked so well that the scuttlebutt had him returning to America to become the editor of American *GQ*. Except then, five years ago just the other day, he died.

Imploded.

You can partly blame this on men's magazines. Or on the *life* needed to inspire a men's magazine.

I WAS TALKING ABOUT MEN'S MAGAZINES last week with Randy Rothenberg, who did a painful stint trying to revive *Esquire*. Had celebrity journalism, we wondered, and all that fawning, undermined the authority of the men's magazines (we blamed this on the Brits, who used celebs to impose a class pecking order)? Was it the leveling or absorption of urban Jewish culture (so you could no longer have that interesting juxtaposition of Jewish writing and Waspy furnishings) that had taken the edge away from men's magazines (frat boys as well as urban Jewish kids could now feel perfectly comfortable picking up *Maxim*)? Did it have to do with the dominance of the fashion advertisers and their dictates? Was it the lack of irony or rebelliousness inherent in the entrepreneurialism of the age?

But what seemed most true was a notion Randy had about the Volkswagen Beetle and the effect of unrequited nostalgia. When the original Beetle was discontinued, he recounted, the company went into a terrible decline. Nothing would revive it. Anything the company did that was not the Beetle itself was tainted. Neither the company nor the marketplace could get the idea of the Beetle out of its head. There was no going forward. That wouldn't and couldn't happen until virtually all the people in the company and in the marketplace who remembered the Beetle had died. Only then could VW reinvent it.

Anyway, these are just some thoughts for the new guys at *Details*. Good luck, and congratulations. ■

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ON JANUARY 20, BILL CLINTON WILL DO SOMETHING HE'S WANTED TO DO ALL HIS LIFE. HE'LL BECOME A NEW YORKER. WHO SAYS THERE ARE NO SECOND ACTS IN AMERICA?

BY JENNIFER SENIOR

EVEN NOW, IN THE FINAL MONTHS OF BILL CLINTON'S FINAL term, it is astonishing how much excitement a presidential sighting can still generate. It's the end of July, a soaking-wet Sunday, and Clinton's convoy is lumbering slowly toward the Starbucks in Chappaqua. Patrons are staring out the window, transfixed by the possibilities—will he drop in? Or is he just passing through? The SUVs stop. • "How ya doin'?" Clinton practically bounds through the front door, all sizzle and black trench coat, and immediately starts working the room. "Hah," he says. Arkansan for *hi.* "Nice to meet you. Hah, I like your pin"—HILLARY FOR SENATE—"thanks for wearing that. Hello. Hah. Hah." • The coffee shop is filled with grown men and women, doubtless accomplished professionals and owners of capacious, well-appointed homes. They start scrambling for autographs. One fellow hands him a grande latte cup to sign; another, a scone bag. Steve Fuchs, co-owner of an advertising design firm, reaches first for a Starbucks employment application, then thinks better of it and hands Clinton a customer

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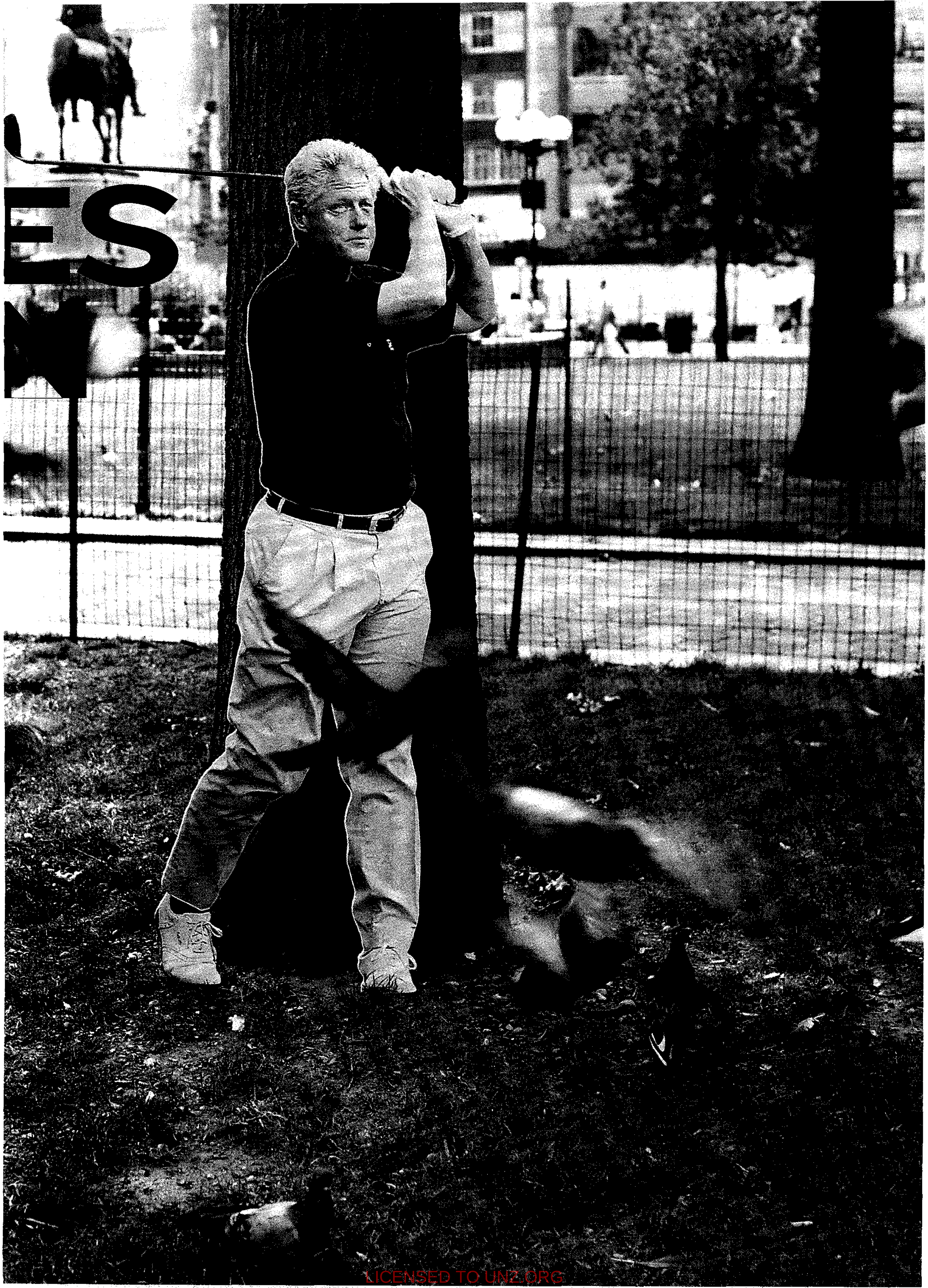
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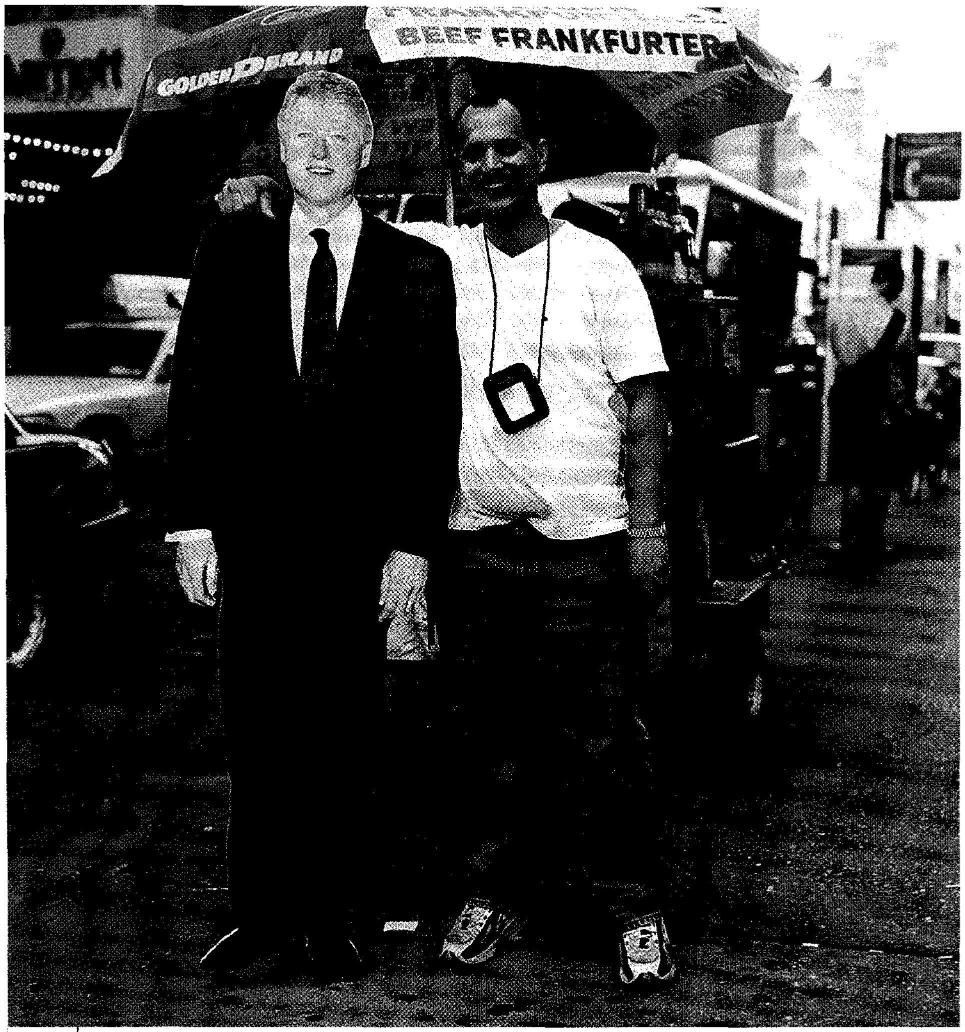


“HE’LL PROBABLY EAT RIGHT HE

ELAINE’S. “AT GERALDO’S TABLE, KEEPING AN

survey instead. (“I thought it would be kind of bad to give him a job application,” he later explained.)

People must have known the president was coming. There is a suspicious number of cameras in this café for a soggy Sunday morning; Fran Krackow, a teacher’s assistant at Roaring Brook School, uses up an entire disposable Fuji. (How did she know the president would be here? I ask. “We have our own network,” answers her friend, Versha Roy, a tad mysteriously.) Jennifer Cook, an attractive blonde massage therapist who got in trouble the last time she saw Clinton by offering him some free deep-tissue therapy (the *Daily News* did a few paragraphs about it, followed by WPLJ and *Saturday Night Live*’s “Weekend Update”), is once again hoping to recruit the president as a new client. “Remember me?” she asks.

“I do,” he says.

“I got a haircut,” she says.

“I like it short.”

The president orders his usual grande decaf, then weaves back through the café, shaking more hands and signing more mochaccino cups. A man hands him a custom-made HILLARY FOR SENATE button. “It’s beautiful,” says Clinton. “I’ll put it in my collection tomorrow.” More pictures. The president poses with a group of children. He signals Jennifer the masseuse to come join him.

Long after he has left, the room is still vibrating like a tuning fork. “I can’t wait,” says Joanna Cirasella, another massage therapist, “to see him in jeans.”

IT SHOULDN’T BE LONG NOW. FOR MOST New Yorkers, Bill Clinton’s transition to private life is still a distant reality. But for the residents of Chappaqua, the well-to-do commuter town 35 miles north of Manhattan, it has already begun. And if their response is any gauge, the people in this city will be unable, for once, to feign indifference when a celebrity enters their midst. Almost everyone is tickled by the prospect of Big Apple Bill—even his political enemies. “I suspect he’s a lot of fun,” says Georgette Mosbacher, once the chief rainmaker for John McCain’s campaign in New York. “It’ll make life more exciting,” says Lucianne Goldberg, book agent at the heart of *l’affaire* Lewinsky. “As a guy, mano a mano, it’d be *grrrrrreat!*” gushes former Senator Alfonse D’Amato, who for two years tortured Clinton about Whitewater. “You’d wanna tell stories with him, you’d wanna play poker with him, you’d wanna watch a ball game with him! I always tell him I’m surprised he never invited me to watch the Super Bowl!”

Clinton jogging in Central Park. Clinton munching on ribs at Virgil’s. Clinton sitting courtside at Knicks games and playing his saxophone at the Café Carlyle and appearing in boldface on “Page Six.” He could find himself a first-rate analyst here. He could do one of those taxicab announcements. (*Hah, this is Bill Clinton. Don’t make my mistake: KEEP YOUR BELT FASTENED.*) And never, ever again would he need to feel shame about indulging in a $200 haircut.

Granted, Clinton’s New York citizenship is hardly a foregone conclusion, even if Terry McAuliffe, a VIP FOB, recently *did* tell the New York *Times* that the president will be spending “one third” of next year in New York. D’Amato thinks the man would have to be nuts. “Can you imagine the media scrutiny? *Helicopters* would follow him to work. There’d be a *trillion* paparazzi. Reporters would *triple their income* just by watching Bill and his latest exploits.”

Plus, adds D’Amato, “Hillary’s not gonna win, so that Chappaqua house—history!”

But let’s suppose Hillary does lose. Apart from New York, what other options does he have? Washington is no place for presidential has-beens; Arkansas, even if it’s Clinton’s mother state and host to his presidential library, is too small for him now. He’s an icon, a citizen of the world. There’s always Hollywood, of course, but isn’t a town that worships James Cameron a tad shallow for someone of Clinton’s restless intellect and humanitarian aspirations? Hollywood may offer a fat paycheck and some first-rate parties, but this is a man who has been marinating in politics since he was a teenager, who was up reading Proust at law school when all of his peers were cramming for finals.

Russell Simmons, the irrepressible chairman of Def Jam records, remembers chatting with Clinton a few months ago at a fund-raiser for his presidential library. "I was giving him a hip-hop kind of rap," he says. "I was like, 'Yo, how you gonna pay your bills? You can make a lot of money, you're *Bill Clinton.'* And you know what? He kept talking about Kosovo. Every time I talked about business, he'd talk about raising money for something that had to be done. The man's a do-gooder."

A man like that would not find meaning in Hollywood. Which leaves New York. It doesn't necessarily mean Clinton will spend the bulk of his afterlife here. "He's got the presidential library," James Carville points out a tad impatiently. "He's goin' to be travelin' a hell of a lot, goin' to Arkansas, goin' to Washington, goin' to commencement speeches, goin' to panels and forums, raisin' money for Democratic candidates, goin' to national associations in Las Vegas and then to Buenos Aires to chair the Commission on the Americas. It's not like he's goin' to be sittin' in that house for months at a time, thinkin' about where he's goin' to get his morning *bagel,* okay? Know what I mean? Know what I mean?"

Yes. But for now, the president has a mortgage in Chappaqua. Presumably, it is where Clinton will be keeping his pinstripes, jogging shoes, and golf clubs. Even if he spends only 30 nights in Chappaqua per year, you can bet he'll spend at least 29 of his days and evenings in the city. (Trust me: I grew up in Chappaqua. Insecticide sprayings are as exciting as it gets.)

There's a fairly recent precedent for this. Twenty years ago, another shrewd ex-president—one who also proposed an ambitious health-care plan, worked hard to improve relations with China, and got himself embroiled in a humiliating scandal—set up shop in New York. The trouble was, New Yorkers didn't care for Richard Nixon very much. For two years, he was *in* the city but never *of* it.

," SAYS LUCIANNE GOLDBERG AT

OULTER'S SKINNY BUTT OUT OF HER CHAIR."

But Clinton is different. Gotham has always adored him, and it will adore him even more when the police no longer shut down the streets to let him through, as they did last week. "I've been in 40 or 50 countries with the president, and nearly every state," says Doug Sosnik, a former senior adviser. "He got a better reception in New York than anywhere we ever went. Up or down, scandal or no scandal, New York always had the largest and most enthusiastic crowds."

D'Amato can say what he wants. My guess is that after a while, Clinton would blend right in. He's a born New Yorker, much more so than his wife: His metabolism is 24-7, his curiosities are bottomless, and he's always hungry—for food, discussion, and, as we've so tediously learned, the messier pleasures in life. (Though someone should probably give him a quick update about the latest urban innovations: Does he know about MetroCards? About Moviefone? That he can order golf videos on Kozmo?)

And if there's anywhere in the world where Clinton will still feel like he's president after January 20, 2001, it's New York. Elected office here is like tenure—isn't Ed Koch still mayor, eleven years later? And isn't D'Amato still Senator Pothole, now and forever, twisting arms and collecting favors and running Albany? "Some people go to New York and never really become a New Yorker," muses Donna Shalala, secretary of Health and Human Services, who once was president of Hunter College. "Bill Clinton will be a New Yorker in five minutes."

LUCIANNE GOLDBERG IS STANDING idly in Elaine's, contemplating the crowd at a launch party for Bloomberg's new Saturday talk show, *Politically Speaking.* "I don't think he'd do the Le Cirque scene," she says, giving her vodka-and-soda an ominous swirl. "The food's not . . . *big* . . . enough. I'm thinking steakhouses. The Old Homestead will become chic again. And Ponte's—that old mob joint on the river—that has huge food and a walk-in humidor. He'll love that."

Whenever anyone, friend or foe, tries to imagine Bill Clinton in Manhattan, this is pretty much the first thing that comes to mind: food.

Goldberg continues scanning the room. "Actually, he'll probably eat right here," she says abruptly. "He'll sit at Geraldo's table, keeping Ann Coulter's skinny butt out of her chair."

The president has indeed eaten at Elaine's before. But that was a lifetime ago, just before he set sail for Oxford. As Elaine herself notes, he had black hair back then. Now she hopes Clinton will come back. "He can sit anywhere he wants," Elaine adds. "He's the big kahuna."

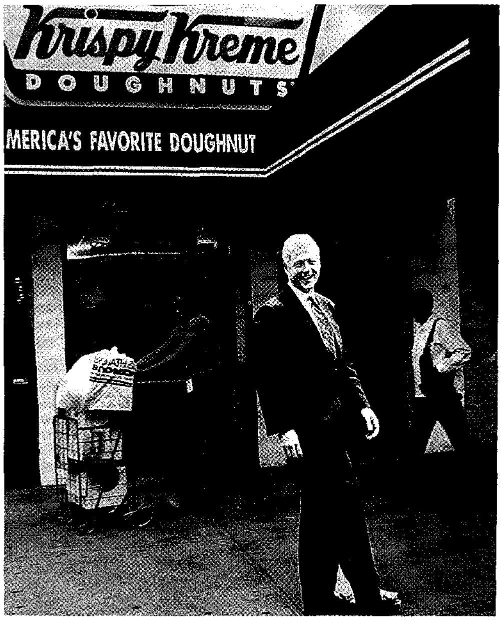
New York society will turn cartwheels to get his attention. Who wouldn't want some of that legendary magnetism in his or her dining room, rearranging the silverware? "When he arrives," predicts Steven Rattner, the all-star investment banker, "there will be at least twenty dinners in his honor. That will be the really funny part."

Harvey Weinstein will probably throw one of them and invite Ben and Gwynnie. Barbara Walters will use her shindig to request the first post-presidential interview. (But Larry King will get it.) Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel will probably do something, too—when she and her husband, the new ambassador to Slovakia, aren't in Bratislava.

The question, though, isn't who will seek out Clinton. The question is whom Clinton himself will seek. As Russell Simmons notes: "He's proven he can get along with the Wasps. But I don't think he's gonna be hanging out with them."

Intellectuals. Scientists. Actors. Media big shots. Writers. Clinton will no doubt cut a stunning swath. "When I was in New York," says Energy Secretary Bill Richardson, formerly the ambassador to the U.N., "I once arranged a dinner with a bunch of writers and playwrights. There was Gabriel García Marquez, E. L. Doctorow, Joan Didion, Walter Mosley . . . and I'll never forget—*he* was the one who was mesmerizing *them.*"

Which says nothing of the effect Clinton will have on this city's women, to whom he's a 214-pound mound of catnip. *Sex and the City* could devote an entire episode to Samantha's attempts to nail



him. “I picture him having dinner at Da Silvano,” says Kate Bohner, sultry bon vivant and business reporter, “and people strolling by on their way to the bathroom in the back, and everyone—from Gwyneth Paltrow to Mary Boone—can't help but stop, even though it's cheesy. Because they just *know* he's a bad boy.”

Which raises another important concern: church. Where in New York do Southern Baptists go? Worse, where in *Westchester*? Reassuringly, the Reverend Dr. Calvin O. Butts says Clinton is welcome at the legendary Abyssinian up in Harlem—“as a Christian, as a brother, as a New Yorker. We love him.”

At any rate, life in New York is going to mean many late nights. So many, in fact, the president just might want to consider renting a pied-à-terre. Sure, the tabloids will have fun with it (*Daily News* headline: ELVIS IS IN THE BUILDING!), and gossip, obviously, will ooze (“Page Six” blind item: *Which former elected official has been caught canoodling with three different blondes outside his new Manhattan digs? Friends say his commuter marriage is working out just fine*. . .). But it wouldn't be an unreasonable investment, considering that the president is a night owl, and the trip back to Chappaqua will seem like an awful schlep at three in the morning.

“It can't be a regular co-op,” says Mario Cuomo, who for some reason has given Clinton's future lodgings a lot of thought. “Because co-ops are democracies run amok. They're all run by people who've failed in their own elections for city councils. So scratch that. He can't live in a condo, because the security problem is too big. And a brownstone—that presents pretty much the same problem.

“So my guess,” concludes the former governor, “is a big luxury hotel with residence apartments. And to make it perfect, it has to be next to a very big McDonald's, because the luxury places will send up syrupy breakfasts with cream in it and call it French, and what he'll really want is an overcooked, multilayered, cheese-laden, horribly-bad-for-you hamburger.”

He pauses for breath.

“Probably on the Upper West Side, because he's youngish.”

“THE UPPER *WEST* SIDE?”

This is Alice Mason, the Upper East Side socialite who became one of Jimmy Carter's biggest patrons once he left public office, the doyenne who in 1992 threw Clinton a legendary fund-raising supper, teasing $1.5 million out of only fifteen couples.

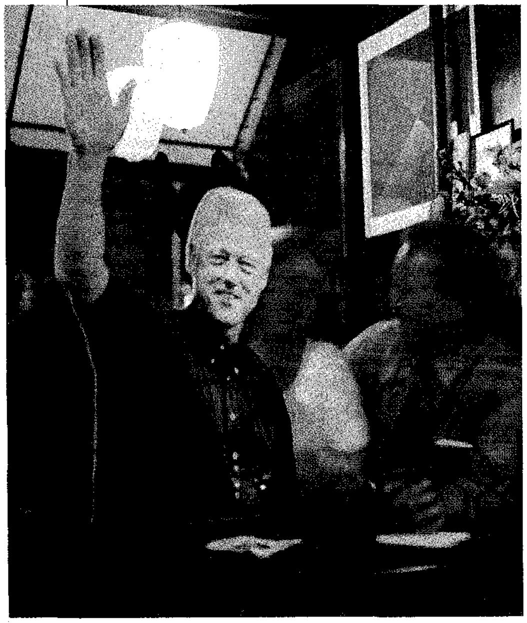
To be fair to Ms. Mason, I had not asked where Clinton would be living. I had asked whether he'd be spending any *time* on the Upper West Side. “Not the Upper West Side,” she says emphatically. “Who's on the Upper West Side?”

“I think he'll probably come down to either the Village or SoHo or Chelsea,” says Ed Koch, who lives a block from Washington Square Park.

Downtown? But isn't that where you-know-who lives?

“PLEASE,” SAYS ED KOCH. “THE

PEOPLE HERE. HE DOESN'T HAVE TO WORR



“Please,” says Koch. “There's seven and a half million people here. He doesn't have to worry about bumping into Monica.”

The truth is, every district in New York will be the Clinton district. One could easily imagine the president out-Koching Ed Koch—popping out of coat-check alcoves and gym lockers, startling people and demanding to know how he's doing. Charlie Rangel, the Democratic congressman from Lenox Avenue, expects to see Clinton in Harlem for jazz. Kathie Berlin, a publicist and old friend of Clinton's, envisions him spending a lot of time in Broadway theaters (“He can hum all the old standards”) and in the Garden for Knicks games. (Eight years ago, just before a White House screening of *Sleepless in Seattle,* Berlin remembers Clinton's standing up, looking around the room, and declaring, “For those of you who'd prefer to watch the Bulls game, come with me!”) Sosnik, his former aide, suspects he'll show up in places even farther-flung—like Brooklyn. And Queens. “One of the refrains I often heard from the president,” he says, “is that he spent too much time in the borough of Manhattan.”

He'll certainly be dining at every restaurant—not just for the food but for the human contact. Patroon. Nobu. Pastis. “In February, Mr. Clinton did a fundraiser here,” says Julian Niccolini, co-owner of The Four Seasons. “At the end of the evening, he went to the dishwashing room and shook hands with everyone. Can you believe he did that? He's not even running anymore!”

It won't be a free-for-all. The Secret Service, those gray-suited stoics in comic-book shades with fusilli wire dangling from their ears, will still cling to him like tape. As late as 1984, a full decade after his resignation, Nixon still had 26 agents assigned to his detail, according to his final chief of staff. They didn't all work the same shift, obviously. But whenever he went out, even for a simple stroll down Madison Avenue, he was accompanied by at least four—two behind, one at his side, and one out in front.

At the Grill Room of The Four Seasons, at least, Clinton can tuck them away at the bar. “He will probably eat at the center booth,” muses Niccolini. “Many people sit there. Michael Korda, Edgar Bronfman, Richard Holbrooke, Diane Sawyer . . .” Not to mention Vernon Jordan, Clinton's closest pal in New York.

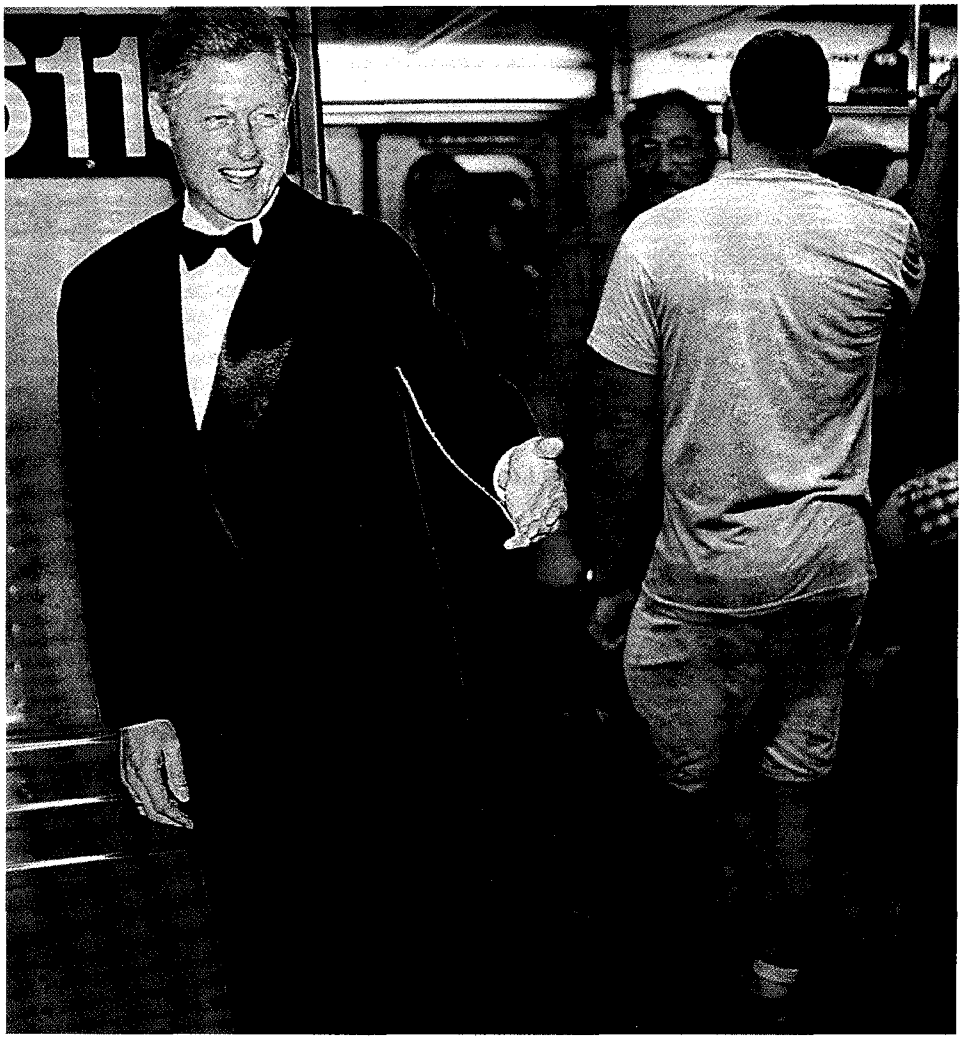
Given his expanded dining horizons, the president should probably join a gym. Sure, he jogs, and nothing could be finer than a morning run around the Central Park reservoir. But there are more people to schmooze with, to beguile, and—let's be frank—to *inspect* at Equinox. If he joins the Reebok Sports Club on the Upper West Side, he can work out with Pinch Sulzberger at 6:30 every morning. If he joins Crunch, he can hire the trainer Monica fired. Not that we're suggesting he has a weight problem. But he has to do *something:* New York does not easily forgive its celebrities for thickening. As it is, he's just twenty pounds away from being the *Post's* new Portly Pepperpot.

I check with Sirio at Le Cirque to see if his food is *big* enough for Clinton. “What? He has already been here several times.” So which table does the president get? “This is very tacky, people talking about tables," Sirio grumbles. "Mr. Nixon never insisted on a table. Politicians are more or less the same. They sit in a corner and wait for someone to talk to them."

HILLARY CLINTON, THE PERSON PERHAPS best equipped to speak about what the president likes to do in New York, will not return my phone calls. So I am forced to do the next best thing. I call Stockard Channing, who plays the president's wife on *The West Wing.*

She likes Clinton, but she has serious questions about his Manhattan bona fides. "No offense," she says, "but I don't consider living in Chappaqua 'living in New York City.' Until he goes by that co-op board or looks for a rental apartment, he's just not a real New Yorker."

EVER SINCE THE CLINTONS MOVED to Chappaqua, the town has become a tourist destination, a carnival. John Vize, the affable New Castle police lieutenant in charge of POTUS detail, says his officers were at one point clocking 100 cars per hour on Old House Lane, the tiny cul-de-sac the Clintons now call home. Protesters have held candlelight vigils there to protest violence in East Timor. Once, Vize's men had to shoo away a few dozen curiosity-seekers from Japan, all disgorged by a giant tour bus. "They were running all over the lawn, cameras a-blazing," he sighs. "One person climbed a tree. It was ridiculous."



’S SEVEN AND A HALF MILLION BOUT BUMPING INTO MONICA.”

Kathy Sloane, the Realtor who found the house, says the search was a nerve-racking experience, and it wasn't just because her clients were the Clintons and the First Lady was in a hurry. The president, as it turned out, was an unruly charge. "I never knew whether he was looking at the house or not," she says. "He seemed to spend the entire time in the kitchen, drinking coffee and talking to the owners." The day Clinton visited his future home, she adds, he was on the grounds for only a few minutes before slipping out the back door, wandering into the adjoining yards, and chatting up his new neighbors. Before leaving, he dragged all of them onto the front lawn for a group photo. With their dogs.

My father was stunned when he first heard the news. "Chappaqua?" he sputtered. "But . . . why? That's not where Masters of the Universe go to retire." He's right, my father. The real big shots in Westchester—Glenn Close, Nelson Peltz, Christopher Reeve, Carl Icahn, Robert Rubin, Ralph Lauren, Tim Robbins and Susan Sarandon—live on sheltered, multi-acred estates in Bedford and Pound Ridge, about twenty minutes away.

Chappaqua, on the other hand, is a town filled with hardworking doctors and lawyers and bankers, affluent but not extravagant, and almost entirely devoid of what the president's critics might call distinguishing characteristics. There are no movie theaters, and there's only one bookstore. My folks finally left two years ago, when they looked around and realized they were the only ones on their block without swing sets and a pram.

The president's new block is perhaps the most surprising of all. You'd think that for $1.7 million, he would have found some secluded place at the end of a country lane—it's possible in Chappaqua. But Clinton didn't. Old House Lane is a resolutely unregal address, a short spur off Route 117, and its homes are unattractive, overgrown, and piled on top of one another. If you're curious, you can drive to the end of the cul-de-sac and see the president's new white house yourself, so long as the Clintons aren't there, and so long as you don't mind a few exasperated stares from the Secret Service, which always keeps its blue sedans parked at the foot of the driveway. It's nice enough. But not $1.7 million–nice. It looks nothing like the home of a former president. More like the home of a suburban dentist.

No matter. "I think that house will be full all the time," says Berlin, who first met Clinton at the Kentucky Derby in 1980. "At the Arkansas governor's mansion—which, by the way, was smaller than the worst apartment in New York—they spent all their time in the kitchen, because it had a counter and great seats and Hillary's a great chili-maker. And I think here, they'll do the same. That's where visitors will congregate. They love to entertain, but their entertaining style is very informal."

The natives are excited. They talk about running into him on the golf course of the Whippoorwill Country Club. (Though if Winged Foot in Mamaroneck accepts him, they'll understand.) Wendy Egan, a waitress at the Chappaqua Restaurant and Café, says people still quiz her about what Clinton had when he came into the restaurant for brunch on February 25 (decaf coffee, dry bagel, ham-bacon-and-sausage omelette) and specifically request to sit in the same booth. "I have customers handing me their phone numbers," she says, "telling me, 'Call me when he next comes in.' " She rolls her eyes. "Did you know that people stake him out? When they know he's in town, they stand at the top of the hill with their cell phones."

Of course, I was staking him out too, at Starbucks, on that torrential Sunday morning this July. He eventually made his way over to my table, planted his hands on the shoulders of me and my friend, and stared at our Sunday crossword, which at the time was 90 percent blank. "Um, we just started," my friend told him feebly.

"It's a good one today," he said.

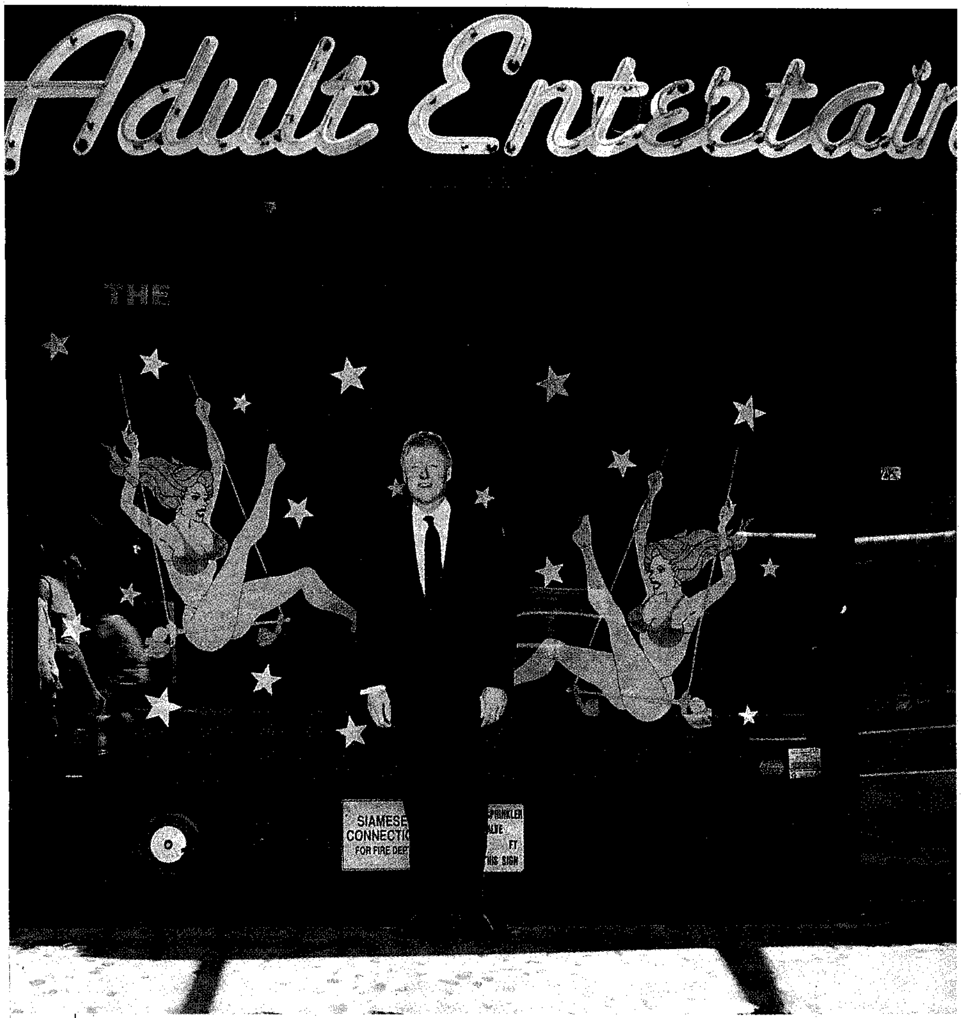
We looked at him helplessly. "I get mine on Thursday," he explained. He continued inspecting our answers. He looked as if he were about to give us a clue.

Quick, I thought. *This might be your only chance.* "What's the first thing you're going to do as a New Yorker?" I blurted out.

He seemed startled. "What?" He was still staring at our puzzle. "Oh." He pointed in the general direction of his house. "I'll probably go up there and sleep for a week."

HIS BOOK DEAL "IS CERTAINLY

AGENT JONI EVANS. "BUT IT'LL HAVE TO B



SO WHAT DOES AN EX-PRESIDENT do for money? A few years ago, recalls photographer Nancy Ellison, she and her husband, William Rollnick, former chairman of Mattel, went out to eat with Clinton at the Feast of Chilmark on Martha's Vineyard. The president pulled out his credit card to pay. "I was trying like crazy to see whether it said PRESIDENT on it," she says. "I couldn't tell. But he does have a credit card, I can tell you that."

What kind was it? More important, what *color* was it?

She considers. "I was quite inclined to think it was a green American Express card," she says. "It wasn't, I don't think, a platinum. But you know, I don't know."

Credit, unfortunately, probably won't suffice when the president leaves office. He will need to find a way to pay off his legal bills, which now total a formidable $4 million, according to the Clinton Legal Defense Fund, and his pension, which comes to $151,800 per year, isn't enough.

Fortunately, he'll be able to do it. Fast.

It takes a memoir. If Jack Welch can score $7.1 million and Robert Rubin, a mere secretary of the Treasury, can score $3 million, it's safe to say that Clinton can get much more for his story. "It's certainly going to hit the $10 million mark," says superagent Joni Evans. "But it couldn't be a policy book. It'll have to be about 25 to 50 percent personal."

There's also the lecture circuit. Carlton Sedgeley, head of Royce Carlton, Inc., who handles the speaking engagements of everyone from Oliver Sacks ($17,500 a pop) to Tom Friedman ($30,000) to Joan Rivers (also $30,000), estimates that a mere 45-minute speech by the former president will be worth $125,000.

But books and speeches—those are temporary gigs, not *careers*. Obviously, the real question for the president is what he'll actually do with himself for the rest of his life. One of the most striking things about his valedictory speech at the Democratic Convention this August was how eager, how energetic, how very much in his prime he seemed—as if the presidency were just an eight-year warmup for things to come.

Clinton is only 54 years old. History doesn't provide too many examples of presidents who retired both young *and* at the zenith of their popularity. The most vivid example is probably Theodore Roosevelt, who left office at 50, went big-game hunting in Africa, did a grand tour of Europe, came back, had a falling-out with William Howard Taft, and ran again for president on the Bull Moose ticket. He lost.

A colleague suggests that the president get his own show on the Oxygen Network—the ladies do love him. My friend Mikaela thinks Clinton should run the other half of the divided Microsoft. If Clinton sticks with his personal trainer, he may also be able to launch his own line of apparel with Phillips–Van Heusen, just like Regis. "Yes, we'd consider talking to him," says Mark Weber, the company's president and chief operating officer. "He's smart, he's good-looking, he looks good in clothes. And we've often thought that his shirt-and-tie wardrobe needed some uplifting."

For months, there have been rumors that Clinton will join the city's legion of corporate rainmakers: Citigroup with Bob Rubin, Lazard Frères with Vernon Jordan, or Forstmann Little & Co. with Erskine Bowles. But those who know him well, really well, can't imagine it. "That is *not* in the works," says Dale Bumpers, the former Arkansas senator who eloquently defended the president during his impeachment trial. "Not that he told me that, but I'd be greatly surprised if he joined a law firm, and the same with Wall Street. He's a thinker—a creative thinker—and he's a constant activist."

Eight years later, many people still don't understand this about Clinton. They fail to realize that politics is his oxygen, his lymph, and that he has organized virtually every chapter of his life around it. Boys Nation at 16. Working for Senator Fulbright throughout college. Barely attending his first year of law school because he was so busy helping Joseph D. Duffey get elected to the Senate.

For these reasons, the much-talked-about job at DreamWorks in Hollywood seems equally improbable to many who know the president well, as pleasing as it may be to think of him tooling around L.A. in his shades, barking orders into his cell phone. (*Get me Ovitz!*) Anyway, Clinton can see Spielberg in the Hamptons. "I'm not sure why DreamWorks would do it, other than out of loyalty," says Frank Biondi, former chairman and CEO of Viacom and Vineyard friend.

"A partner with Geffen and Spielberg?" asks Cuomo. "I can't believe that. It's too small for him. I think he's going to come as close as he can to continue doing the work he did as a president. How does he do this? He can speak to the world. We don't have anyone laying out ideas for us, giving us some intellectual guidance. That's what Clinton can do. And that's what we need. Desperately. Desperately."

Clinton has publicly said that the Jimmy Carter model of retirement intrigues him. It shouldn't surprise anyone, considering that the two men share a number of characteristics: charm, brains, Southern Democratic traditions. When Carter left office, he too was young (55) and broke. Unlike Clinton, he was also wildly unpopular, so he spent the first year of his afterlife cocooned in Plains, Georgia, writing his book and struggling with depression. By 1982, though, he was fully engaged with Habitat for Humanity and had launched the Carter Center, which has since blossomed into a 300-person nonprofit that takes up causes like river blindness and guinea worm.

One of the great surprises of the Clinton presidency has been his ability to broker agreements and charm uncharmable world leaders. So now, the man who was once derided as the ultimate rube, a domestic-policy wonk at best, seems the perfect footloose diplomat—a world superhero. And he's already wearing briefs.

"It'd be wonderful if he could do something that engages him in the problems of development and poverty around the world," says James Wolfensohn, president of the World Bank. "This is not politics, either; he really *feels* these issues. He could use his position and his recognition to intervene on an ad hoc basis in peace-making."

He wouldn't compete with the Carter Center, either. "There's another 2 billion people coming onto the planet in the next 25 years," Wolfensohn dryly notes. "There's plenty of work to go around."

It isn't just Wolfensohn who thinks this way. A lot of people do. Friends, members of Congress, his Cabinet—many would like to see him, as Rangel puts it, be an ambassador without portfolio, a world troubleshooter. "His reputation abroad is practically untarnished," gushes Rangel. Then, as an afterthought, he adds: "And if I get outta Congress, I'll take care of the Caribbean and Africa for him."

Clinton has been spending a lot of time abroad lately. It might come to pass. Yet Rangel, in spite of his enthusiasm, still finds it all a bit depressing. "It's going to be bad," he says. "When you have been the president of the United States and the leader of the free world, really, you can only go down."

AT THE END, ALEXANDER THE Great saw that there was nothing left to conquer, and he wept. In general, Clinton seems to have a hard time leaving things. It shows up in banal ways, like his aides' having to drag him out of cocktail parties, and it shows up in more dramatic ways, like his seriously overstaying his welcome at the Democratic Convention. In the waning days of his presidency, he has also shifted into compensatory overdrive—working furiously to resolve the Middle East peace talks, skipping all over the globe, fund-raising, campaigning, and fund-raising some more. Leaving the Oval Office clearly won't be easy.

It was hard enough for him to leave Starbucks that Sunday. A man handed him a fresh coffee cup to sign. "C'mon," he begged. "One more? 'To Timothy.' " Clinton obeyed and signed: TO TIMOTHY. Then he headed to the open doorway and, despite the driving rain, lingered there for a few minutes, shaking every last unshaken hand and chitchatting with the crowd. He imparted a few words of pet-care wisdom to a little girl with a puppy. Then he turned to go.

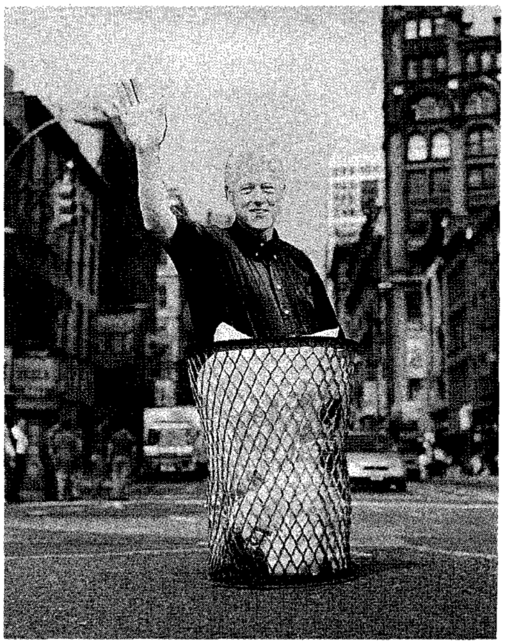
"Hey," he shouted as he was leaving. He pointed to me and my friend.

Yes . . . ?

"Good luck with that puzzle." He breezed out the door.

And to you, Mr. President. Yours is going to be much harder to solve. ■

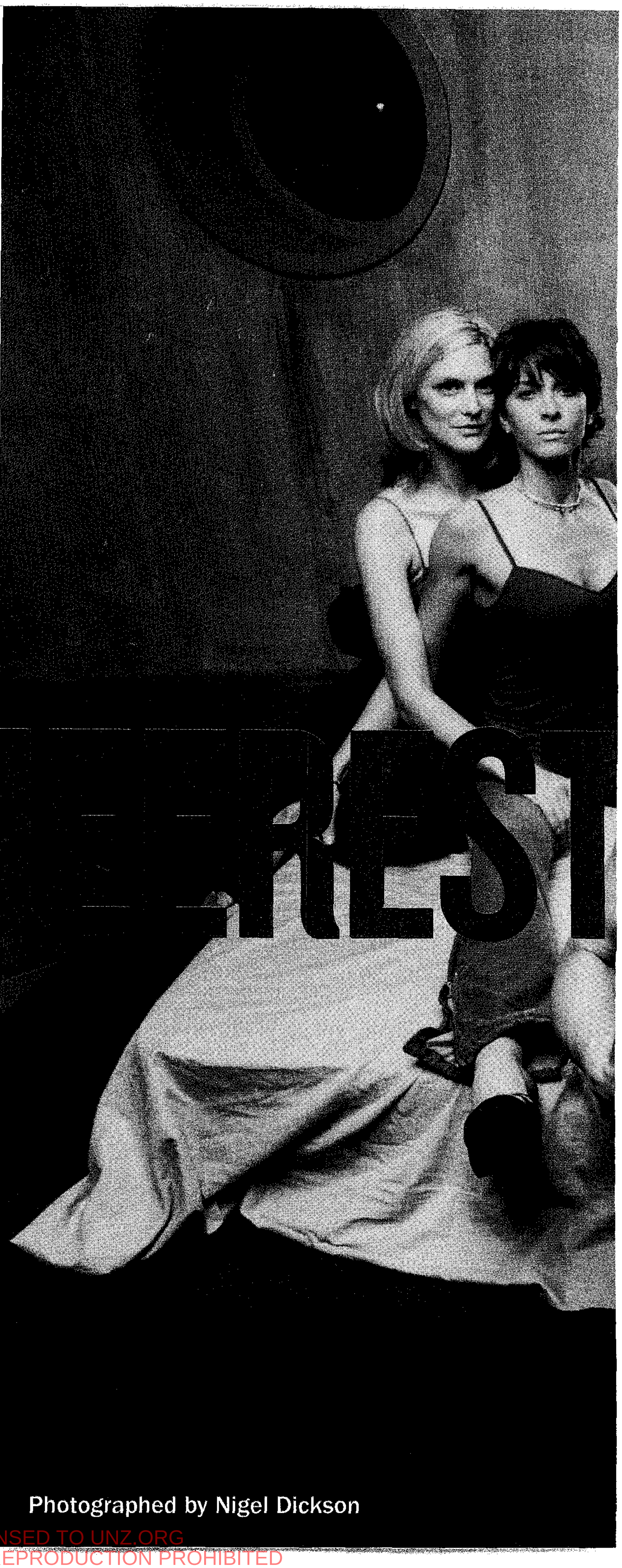
ING TO HIT $10 MILLION," SAYS
BOUT 25 TO 50 PERCENT PERSONAL."



This fall's most explosive new drama is Showtime's version of a defiantly dirty, politically incorrect, sex-and-drug-soaked gay drama that was excoriated in Britain—until it became a critically acclaimed hit.

By Charles Kaiser

THE QUEEREST



Photographed by Nigel Dickson

FASTEN YOUR SEAT BELTS: HERE COMES *QUEER AS Folk,* the TV show that makes *Sex and the City* look like a Saturday-morning cartoon. Arriving this fall on Showtime, the two-hour-fifteen-minute pilot features the most outrageous language you have ever heard, some of the most compelling characters you have ever met—and American TV's first explicit lovemaking scene between a 29-year-old man and a 17-year-old boy.

Actually, there are two of those scenes in the show's first two hours, punctuated by a visit to the hospital to meet the 29-year-old's newborn son, who has just emerged from the womb of a lesbian who has been inseminated with his sperm. In the maternity ward, the 29-year-old boasts of his conquest of the 17-year-old, provoking this response from the mother's lesbian lover: "So, you've both had an infant tonight!"

Queer As Folk first aired in 1999 in Great Britain on Channel 4, the country's alternative commercial network. Over there, the 17-year-old was only 15, and the gay sex was the most explicit ever seen on British television. So the

READY FOR PRIME TIME? The cast of *Queer As Folk:* top row (from left), Thea Gill, Michelle Clunie, Sharon Gless, Randy Harrison, Peter Paige, Scott Lowell; *front row* (from left), Gale Harold, Hal Sparks.

outrage from horrified heterosexuals—and from gays disgusted by the predatory stereotype—was entirely predictable. But what followed was not.

After the third episode, practically every leading British critic fell in love with the show. The reason is simple: *Queer As Folk* isn't merely sensationalistic; it's fabulous television, the most important gay drama since Off Broadway theatergoers were stunned by *The Boys in the Band* more than 30 years ago. Just as *Boys* blew the lid off a slice of gay life that had been hiding in plain sight for years, *Queer As Folk* is the first completely honest depiction of the ordinary lives twentysomething gay men lead in big cities everywhere—with absolutely nothing held back. Like *Boys,* the new program is replete with dark humor and stinging dialogue.

But *Queer As Folk* is even more revolutionary. Not only are its characters completely lacking in the self-hatred that permanently dates *Boys* to its birth in 1968, but it also tackles the last taboo for enlightened liberals, the one that still makes even the most liberated straight person squeamish: the fact that every gay adult begins life as a gay child.

It's the willingness of the original show's creator, Russell T. Davies, to plunge into treacherous waters that gives it so much heft. At the heart of Davies's craft is a simple but crucial notion: "There is no drama in political correctness." Davies feels it's important to show a 17-year-old having sex with a 29-year-old simply because it's true to life: A gay teenager in the process of self-discovery is likely to begin by going home with someone much older than he is.

"You've just got to be true to people and character and motivation," the 37-year-old writer told me on the phone from his home in Manchester, England, where the original show was set. "Whatever you're writing about, you've got to get under the skin and get to the heart and look at that stuff that no one likes to look at." And he has two words for the gay activists who believe he has libeled a whole community with his promiscuous, drug-taking protagonists: "Fuck 'em!"

While the characters have a universal quality about them, Davies chose gritty Manchester instead of cosmopolitan London to avoid focusing on the glitzier part of urban gay life. The American producers have done the same thing by locating the series in Pittsburgh, although the show is actually being shot in Toronto.

THE TITLE COMES FROM AN OLD YORKshire saying: "There's nowt so queer as folk," meaning there's nothing as strange as people. For Showtime, which has half as many subscribers as HBO (and a severe case of *Sopranos* envy), *Queer As Folk* is an opportunity to create its own uproar. In the words of Showtime CEO Matt Blank, "This is *real* reality television."

Of course, gay characters are hardly a novelty in American sitcoms; last season, there were sixteen of them in prime time, according to the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. But no one has ever seen gay characters quite like these, characters just as real and nuanced and hedonistic as many of their real-life counterparts.

It's that spirit of fearless originality that convinced Ron Cowen and Daniel Lipman they had to do the American version after they were contacted by Tony Jonas, a former president of Warner Bros. Television who is now an independent producer. Jonas joined Joel Schumacher, the show's then-director, but Schumacher dropped out of the project after complaining that he didn't believe Showtime would remain faithful to the spirit of the original. Cowen, Lipman, and Jonas then became the three principal executive producers. Cowen and Lipman, who were responsible for five years of *Sisters* on NBC, also wrote the 135-minute pilot of *Queer As Folk,* which will air this December.

Cowen and Lipman have been lovers and writing partners for more than 25 years; they have a history of pushing the envelope on American television. Their first episode of *Sisters* opened with an extended discussion of multiple orgasms. That intro was subsequently axed by NBC, creating three minutes of black screen. Before that, they wrote *An Early Frost,* the first TV movie about AIDS, and they know better than anyone what a quantum leap *Queer As Folk* will be for American TV.

"Fifteen years ago when we did *Early Frost,* we were not allowed to show the two guys even touch," Cowen remembers. "They couldn't kiss, they couldn't even hold hands. Aidan Quinn played a character named Michael who had to tell his parents that he had AIDS and that he was gay—they didn't even know that he was gay. His grandmother was very supportive when he and his lover came to visit, and we had a line where Sylvia Sidney turned to her grandson and said, "I like your friend." And Standards and Practices at NBC said, "She can't say that line, because that supports the homosexual lifestyle."

On the other hand, the flamboyantly gay character who was dying of AIDS was allowed to say anything he wanted, "because he's going to die," the network censors explained.

ALL OF WHICH IS A LONG, LONG WAY FROM the Zeitgeist of the first episode of the British version of *Queer As Folk,* in which the tongue of a 29-year-old man travels farther down the backside of a 15-year-old boy than any tongue has ever traveled on TV before. That image has produced the identical reaction in everyone I know who has seen it: "How did they ever show that on British television?" Which is always immediately followed by "We'll never see that on American television." They might be wrong about that.

DIRTY DANCING **A tender moment at *Folk's* mythical disco, Babylon. Opposite: The cast of the original show quickly became cult figures in England.**

Photograph by L. Pief Weyman.

The original version already enjoys cult status among gay men on both sides of the Atlantic. Bootleg tapes of the British show were passed to American friends in the show-business community; soon they were showing up all over Chelsea, Fire Island, West Hollywood, and the Castro. In August, an edited version of the British show began to get its first airing on a new gay cable network called C1TV, which has cobbled together a network by purchasing time on public-access stations that reach 7 million viewers in 25 American cities. However, to placate more conservative cable operators, all the nude scenes in the original have been blurred, and the harshest language has been bleeped out. The uncut version has been shown at gay film festivals all across America.

As a result, the director and the executive producers all realize that they will face heavy criticism from the fans of the original if they tamper with its production values. At the same time, they're not interested in making a carbon copy of the original. Although the pilot does incorporate all of the major plot points of the first three British episodes, it also expands the role of the lesbian couple, who in the new version are portrayed by two strikingly good-looking actors, Michelle Clunie and Thea Gill. And since the first season of the American version will be twice as long as the British one—which involved eight episodes—the executive producers will have to invent many new story lines. In fact, if the show becomes a hit, Showtime hopes to keep it going for five more seasons.

This year, Showtime has sponsored gay-pride events in a dozen cities, passing out handheld fans promoting the show that are tastefully emblazoned with the words *Bottom, Top, Hung, Disco Whore,* and *Bad Boy.*

When I first met with them, the executive producers seemed confident that there would be no pressure to tone down the graphicness of the original. "There was a stipulation at the very beginning of this project that we would not hold back—that we would either meet or surpass what they did in the English version," said Cowen. "They said, 'Go as far as you want.' "

The director, Russell Mulcahy, told me he was disclosing that he was gay because that fact makes this project especially important to him. "I just think it's an irrelevant point most of the time," he said over lunch in the cafeteria of the Toronto school that was used as a location on the tenth day of shooting. "The only reason I mention it here is, I thought it is relevant to what I'm doing. I feel a double commitment—not only to a good piece of film, but there's a further obligation for me as a gay man.

Mulcahy, who lives with his lover in Sydney in his native Australia, is known for the imaginative visual style of his most successful feature, *Highlander,* and the countless music videos he has made for Fleetwood Mac, Billy Joel, Elton John, Culture Club, and Duran Duran. "It's definitely not watered down," he continues. "It's probably pumped up." To prove the point, he gleefully described how he simulated an ejaculation on the second day of shooting, using a syringe filled with Liquid Silk, "a shampoo with the consistency and color of sperm. There was me, or the assistant director, with these hands between the legs of some actor with this big syringe."

Lipman said, "You can't do this project and not go all the way. And it isn't even in the graphicness of the sex or the language; it's in the characters too—especially the character of Brian, who is so unapologetic, who is a gay character who has balls, who fucks, who takes drugs, who is not sick, and who doesn't need to apologize. This is a character unlike commercial gay characters, who are either eunuchs or clowns. Those are nonthreatening gay characters. To many people, Brian is a threatening gay character. That's why people have the reactions they do."

"We've talked about what it's really about, and to us it's about becoming a man," Cowen told me. "It doesn't matter if you're a gay man or a straight man—you have a certain rite of passage. I think it's harder for gay men to become men. It's very easy to be caught as a boy. And it's almost a fight: Are you going to live or are you going to die becomes a very big question. A lot of gay men die of AIDS; a lot of gay men experience the death of the soul and the spirit. I think a lot of gay men fall into crystal meth and other drugs. It's very easy to die as a gay boy and not become a man."

Most people who know about the new production assumed that it would be toned down after word leaked out that Showtime had decided to age the youngest character from 15 to 17. But the producers have figured out how to have it both ways on the age issue: To fill the youngest role, they found a blond newcomer named Randy Harrison who looks about 14 even though he's about to celebrate his 23rd birthday. Harrison graduated from the University of Cincinnati Conservatory of Music last March, did a single showcase in New York, found an agent, and landed the role of a lifetime last summer. *Queer As Folk* is the very first time he's ever been in front of a camera, and the director is already calling him "the two-take wonder."

As a member of Generation Y, Harrison felt little hesitation about announcing that he was gay. "I knew that if I ever were to become famous, I would be myself. I've had a boyfriend for three and a half years. I'm proud of that."

Unlike the character he plays, Harrison is a stranger to the gay club scene—he never even bothered to go to the gym until he landed this role. On the other hand, he wasn't the least bit intimidated by the sex scenes, although he did find it tedious to have to fake so many orgasms "over and over and over again." He says he's warned his parents about what to expect, but "I don't think they believe it entirely. They keep saying, 'Well, they can't show anything too bad on TV.' And I keep saying, 'It's going to surprise you.' "

Peter Paige plays Emmett, the most flamboyant member of the troop, and he also felt the need to be completely truthful about who he is. "I am a gay man," he said. "I don't mind that appearing in print. I just don't think I could do this show and then apologize for my sexuality by not stating it as fact. What I love about my character is that Emmett is the gayest of the bunch, and he's not self-loathing. Of all these people, Emmett really is the happiest with who he is. And I think that is revolutionary." Scott Lowell, another newcomer to film, declined to say whether he is gay or straight, because "I'm playing a gay character—that's what I want people to believe. And after this, who knows what I'm going to be?!"

Hal Sparks, the former host of *Talk Soup* on E!, who plays Brian's best friend, Michael, and Sharon Gless, who plays Michael's mother, are the only two actors in the show who have had any significant public recognition before now.

For this job, Sparks had to accept an elaborate nudity clause, which allows the use of every part of his body on film. "Yeah, yeah," said Sparks. "But don't get all excited. This is a cutting-edge series, but there's nothing cutting-edge about my penis. It's just standard-issue African-American—it's just a little paler than most.

"I did have trepidation," Sparks admitted about his role. "And this momentary twinge of 'Oh, my God—what if they think I'm gay?' And I would be a liar if I said that didn't occur. But what makes you a greater person is when you feel that and you go, 'But this is for the better me. This is for the betterment of everybody around me.' "

THE WILLINGNESS OF SO MANY of the principals to talk so honestly is another barometer of how much the world has changed since the Stonewall riot launched the modern gay-liberation movement 31 years ago. But there's a flip side to all this courage. According to Jerry Offsay, president of programming at Showtime, practically all of the major talent agencies were scared away by the show's content. Even after Offsay offered to triple the starting salary for the actor playing Brian, there were no additional applicants for the role.

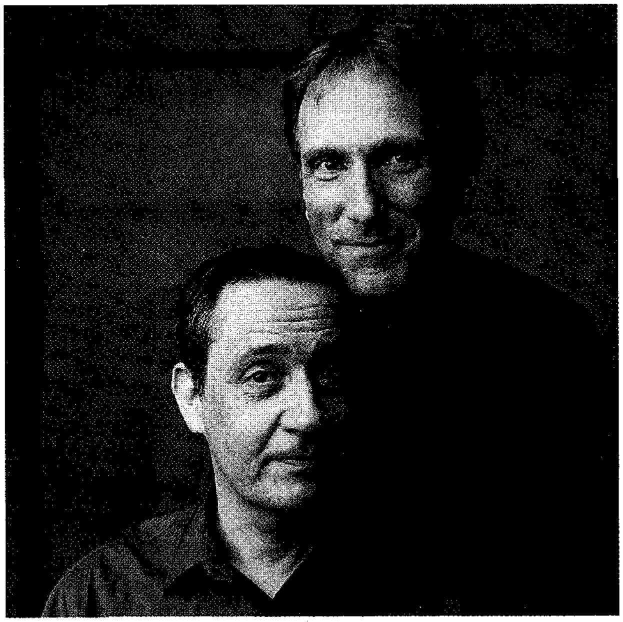
"I got on the phone with some of the big agents," Offsay remembered, "and I said, *whoever* this guy is, we will offer him parts playing straight characters in our other movies, so that he's not typecast as a gay man. And he will be a star. And they said, 'We understand, but it is *very* sexual.' " In addition, there was a long list of fashion companies, including Versace and Abercrombie & Fitch, that refused to allow their products to be shown on the show. (Tom of Finland, on the other hand, was delighted to provide a pair of orange leather pants for Emmett's character.)

"I think we all realize at this point that Hollywood as a liberal business is a myth," said Lipman. "It's extremely homophobic. From our experience on this show, I would say, far more than I ever imagined." But, he added, "the people who were brave enough, who wanted the challenge and were up to it, found it."

Sharon Gless, of *Cagney & Lacey* fame, is one of those actors; she loved the script as soon as she read it. One of Gless's best friends happens to be Carole Smith, who is Offsay's personal assistant, so Smith instantly arranged for Gless to meet with the show's producers. Gless told me, "This is definitely the biggest character I've ever played. I didn't see the original version, but I get the thrust of it, pardon the expression. The stuff that comes out of my mouth is outrageous."

Gless plays the waitress mother of Michael, the role played by Sparks. "She loves all the boys," Gless said of her character. "I see her like the den mother to all of them."

Gless's favorite line so far is when she asks the boys, " 'So what are you having?' and Emmett says, 'I'm not hungry.' And I say, 'Em, honey, you should try and eat *some* of your protein off the plate.' "



LIFE PARTNERS Dan Lipman and Ron Cowen co-produced the show.

Gale Harold is the newcomer who plays Brian, the edgiest character in the piece, a guiltless 29-year-old who seems determined to sleep with every attractive young man in Pittsburgh—except Michael, his best friend, who has secretly been in love with him since they were teenagers. This unrequited love is at the heart of the story. Harold, who looks like a cross between Eric Roberts and Jeff Bridges, ran a motorcycle shop in East Oakland before he started acting three years ago, at the age of 28. In person, he has a smoldering quality, which snared him the role of Brian on the final day of casting. Lipman said, "We all ran over to the casting director's office, and Gale had it all." When shooting began, he was also one of the first two actors who had to expose it all.

"The sex scenes were kind of mind-blowing," Harold told me. "There was one day of wardrobe, and then it was right to bed. And it's intense, you know, because it's going to be on *television.* You've got this cavalier predator having his way with a 17-year-old, who looks maybe 10, and the visual implications are unbelievable." And maybe too risky, even for a cable network whose motto is "No limits." For the producers, what will actually make it to air has suddenly become the $22 million question—that's the amount they're spending to produce the show's first season.

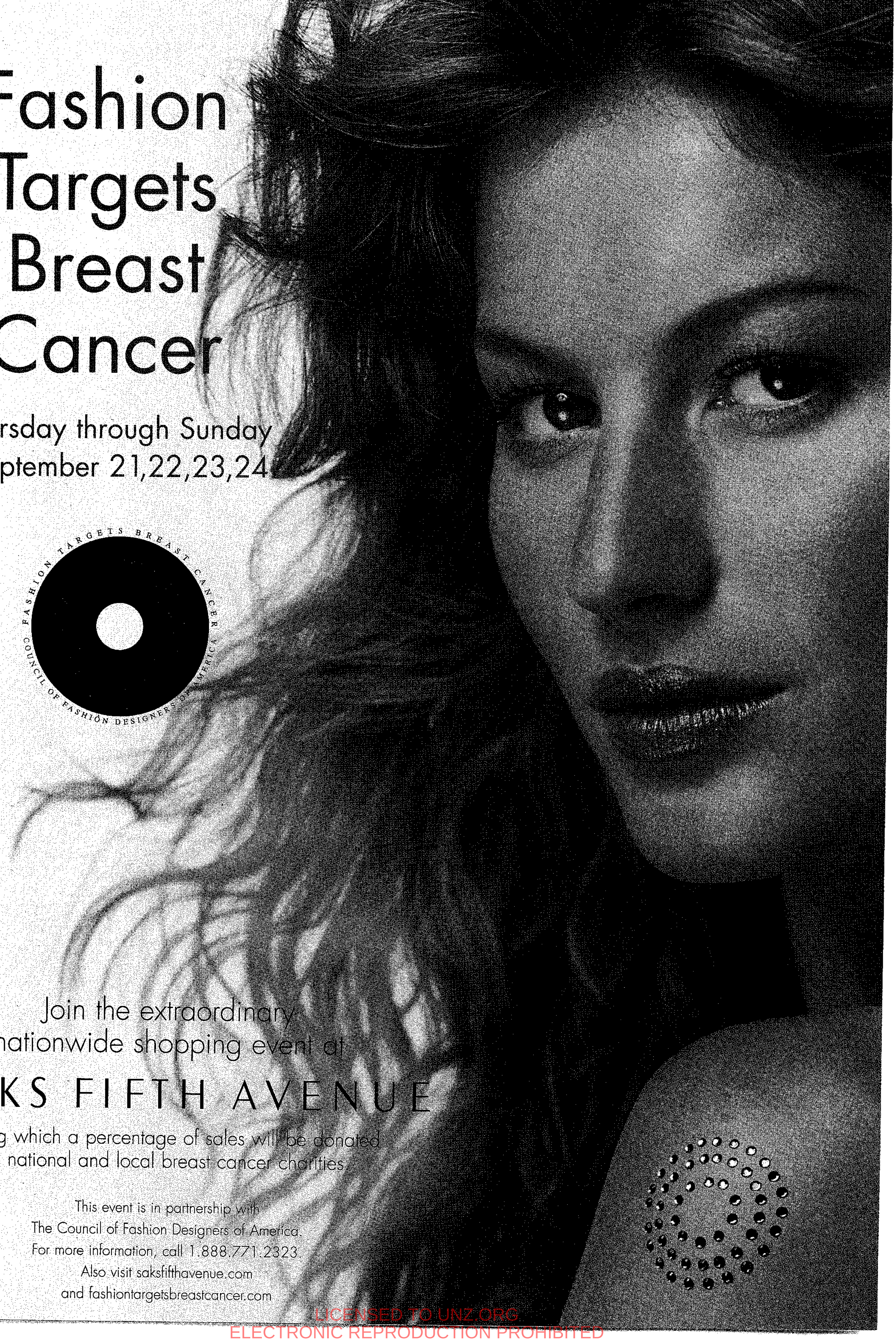
When I interviewed the network's executives, I discovered that Showtime has a policy of showing only R-rated movies, and nothing rated NC-17. Even though it doesn't have to, it has sent all of its most controversial movies to the Motion Picture Association of America to be rated, and recut them slightly to avoid an NC-17 rating. I asked Jerry Offsay if that meant the British version of *Queer As Folk* could never be shown on his network.

"I think if I'd taken out five or ten seconds here or there, you could have got back to an R." He said it was "possible" that he would take the new *Queer As Folk* to the MPAA to be rated to placate cable operators who distribute Showtime. But he insisted it would still be "the sexiest, edgiest series to premiere on any network in America."

One thing that's working in favor of the creative freedom of the producers is the network's eagerness to cause a sensation. "We're going for it in every way," Showtime's CEO, Matt Blank, told me. "It's going to be hot." At a time when the competition for television viewers has never been fiercer, Showtime is doing everything it can think of to make sure its latest offering won't go unnoticed. Already this year it has co-sponsored gay-pride events in a dozen cities around the country, passing out thousands of handheld fans promoting the show and tastefully emblazoned with the words HUNG, BOTTOM, TOP, DISCO WHORE, and BAD BOY.

With this self-consciously provocative marketing campaign, Showtime, which gained attention and viewers when it aired the controversial *Lolita* in 1998, is hoping to do it again. "Our objective is to get a real inside buzz in the gay community," said Blank. "And then I think as we move out to the straight community, the greatest thing we have going for us is curiosity."

Blank admits the show is bound to offend both gays and straights. "There's a chance that *everyone* will be upset with us," he said, not sounding too displeased with the prospect. But Viacom, Showtime's corporate parent, should be used to a little controversy by now. The company's other hot-button offering this fall is the new Paramount television talk show featuring Dr. Laura. ■



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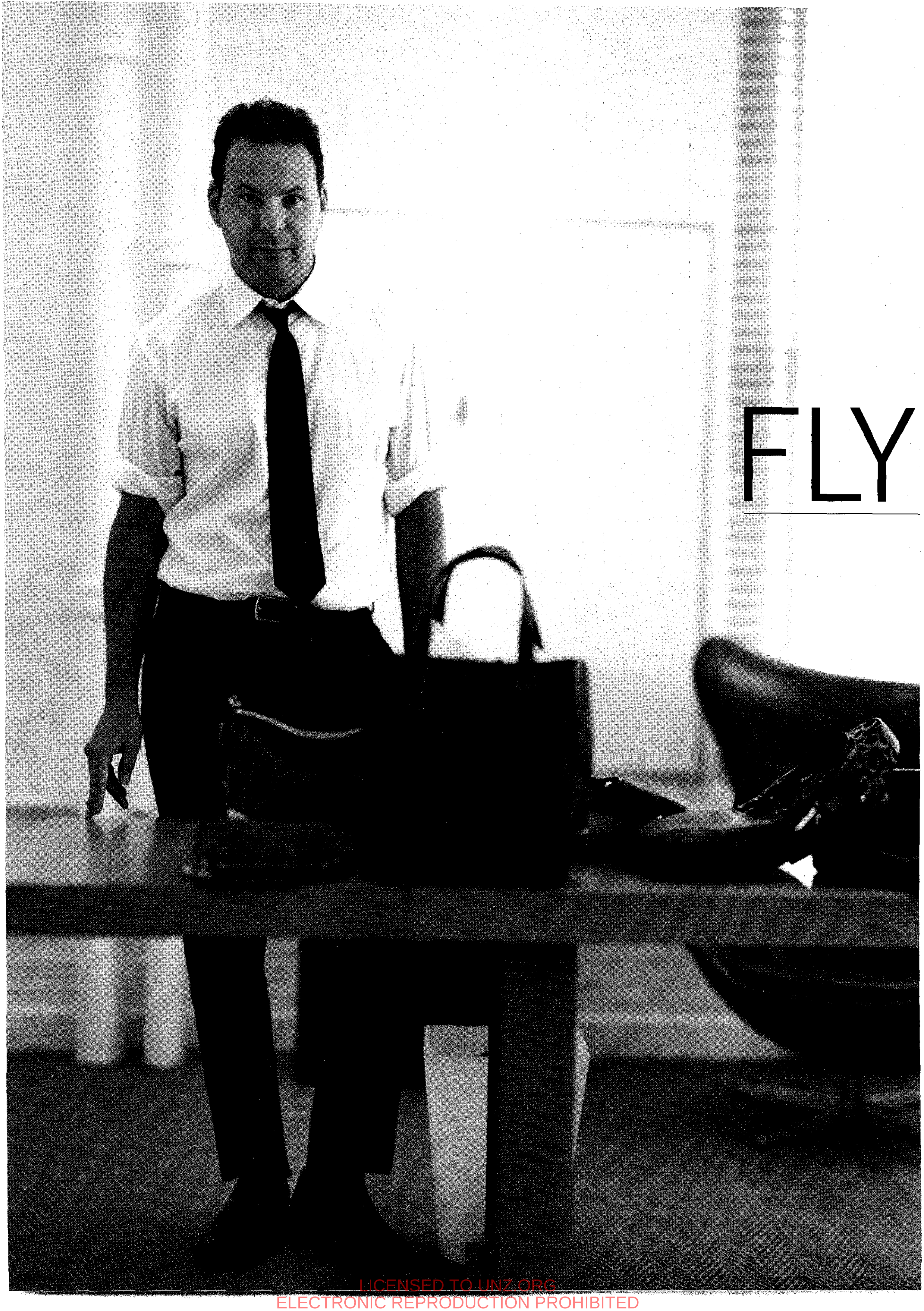


FLY

NG COACH

Creative director Reed Krakoff is piloting Coach from fusty leather goods to hip fashion accessories.

BY SARAH BERNARD

IT LOOKS AND FEELS LIKE A BLAZING JUNE AFternoon, but for Reed Krakoff, president and executive creative director of Coach, it is Christmas Eve. He is halfway through the second day of shooting Coach's holiday ad campaign, which stars actress and Sprint muse Sela Ward; Eddie, the famed Jack Russell terrier from *Frasier,* who's just finished working a doggie raincoat; and Marisa Tomei, who is draped across a couch as if taking a champagne-induced time-out from a Yuletide extravaganza. Swarms of stylists in yellow-tinted aviators are making themselves useful, reglossing Tomei's already shellacked lips and re-parting her perfectly parted hair as she dangles a black evening bag (a pearlized mini–Girlie Hobo with a rhinestone Swarovsky buckle, to be exact), snuggles up to a Coach Mongolian-lamb pillow, and angles a Coach watch in the direction of photographer Mikael Jansson.

In other words, all the players in this Philippe Starck–esque Watermill rental look like they're in a photo shoot of a photo shoot. All but Krakoff, who is quietly standing in jeans and a white T-shirt on the sidelines contemplating Polaroids of sultry Katie Holmes—yesterday's subject—in a tan leather duster, resting on her elbows in the Napeague dunes.

Not so long ago, when and if style arbiters thought of Coach, it was not a tanned, busty co-ed that came to mind but a beat-up leather Bucket bag someone's mother clutched for twenty years. Which is exactly why Lew Frankfort, Coach's chairman and CEO, pursued Krakoff, 36, a Parsons grad who'd clocked time at Narciso Rodriguez, Ralph Lauren, and, most recently, Tommy Hilfiger, to infuse some sexiness into the slumping American icon. With an all-encompassing post akin to Tom Ford's at Gucci, Krakoff began a multi-front assault. He whitewashed the mahogany-paneled stores, where bags had been displayed library-style, as well as the West 34th Street headquarters. "Turns out they had just finished restoring the bricks," he says.

Next, he hired celebrated fashion photographers like Peter Lindbergh, Mario Testino, and Jansson to shoot sleek portraits for Coach's ad campaigns and dramatically "dimensionalized" its repertoire—the spectrum now stretches from alligator clutches to denim baguettes—to compete with the Fendi-and-Prada revolution. "It's very easy to verbalize it; people throw around words. We have to be 'modern' and 'updated' yet 'classic,' " he mimics. "What does that mean?" Krakoff began the overhaul three and a half years ago, rolling out in addition to the new bags a critical mass of eyewear, shoes, watches, and home furnishings in conjunction with Baker. But it's just this season that Coach and therefore Krakoff have exploded on the radar screen of the city's fashion elite.

"Coach is a huge engine to turn," acknowledges Wendy Hessen of *Women's Wear Daily.* "But American women are starting to know more about what makes a good bag, and Coach has this history of quality. So it's kind of played into their hands." "It's light-years ahead of where it was in terms of design," adds Kal Ruttenstein, senior vice-president of fashion direction at Bloomingdale's. Last month, for the first time in Coach's history, its product made the cover of *WWD* and a full page in *Vogue.* The Hamptons tote, its best-selling satchel, is rivaling Gucci's Jackie bag for ubiquity. Fashion editrix Elizabeth Saltzman, Angie Harmon, and TLC's Chilli are devoted fans. "I ran into Lisa Atkin, who runs Fabien Baron's studio. She was carrying it," Krakoff delights in saying. "And she was in *Gucci.*"

His ultimate goal, however, is farther-reaching: to expand the label into a global lifestyle brand. (Coach underwear, anyone?) To that end, parent company Sara Lee is spinning off the business and taking it public. Pegasus Apparel, LVMH, and Gucci were all reportedly interested in the house. By growing the company, Krakoff insists, Coach is simply satisfying customers' desires. Knowing just how much and at what pace customers are willing to absorb those desires is his specialty. A recent test-launch of a demi-zip satchel in a jacquard of adjoining *C*'s—Coach's contribution to the logo frenzy, which Krakoff spent two years perfecting—sold out in five days, helped along by a Japanese woman who bought twenty. When a pair of $800 leather low-rise jeans was fastened to a mannequin in the flagship's window, a waiting list eighteen deep resulted. "They *want* fashion from us," he says.

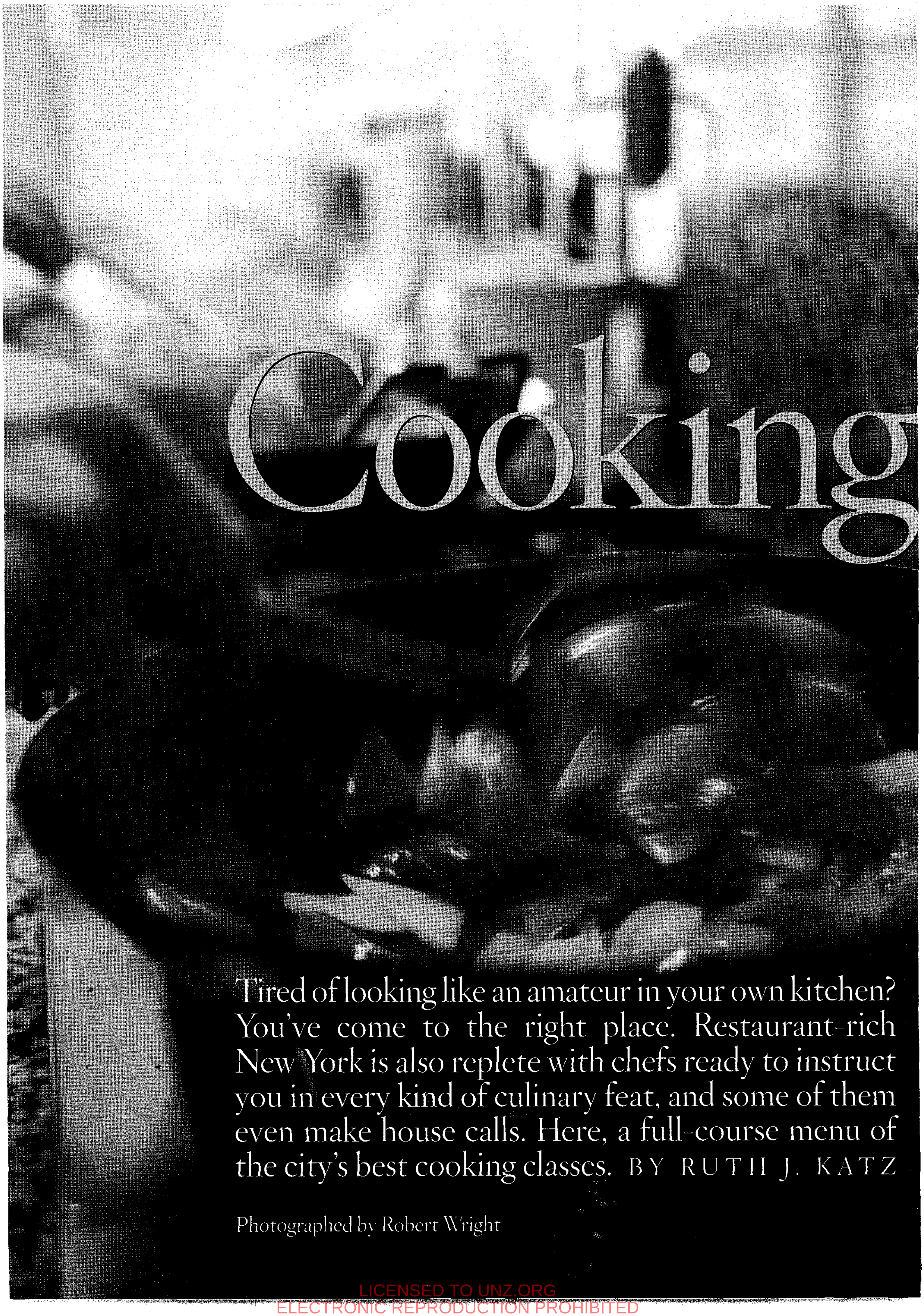
Krakoff admits to having toted Coach wallets and travel bags growing up in Weston, Connecticut. It's the nostalgia factor that made him accept the job even though he was en route to Milan as creative director of Trussardi when offered it; and it's the nostalgia factor that forces him to act like a candidate running for office who must expand his base without alienating his core constituency. "Coach has amazing equity," he explains. "Coach was in *The Preppy Handbook.* There was a Bucket bag in *Love Story.*"

Forgoing pop culture, Krakoff prefers to cull his inspiration from the art world. He's an avid collector of forties French and American furniture. His two-story townhouse apartment, which features a newly purchased Donald Bachelor canvas, was recently photographed for *Elle Decor.* In his office, a postcard of the Picasso museum in Paris, an invitation to a twentieth-century-furniture auction, as well as a tiny clay handprint filled in with hot-pink sparkles (a present from his 5-year-old daughter) were part of a recent collage—a "cultural map"—he constructs in his office as he fleshes out the look and feel of a line. When the season is over, he tears it down. "Even if you love it, you have to cleanse," he notes. "I'm a big proponent of throwing away and starting again."

Back in Watermill, Krakoff wanders down the gravel drive to one of the wardrobe trailers parked at its end. Towering stacks of samples surround Sela Ward, who is getting her ebony hair blown out. "Um, what is a Hamptons tote, exactly?" she asks in a slight southern drawl. "My friend said I had to bring her one. You've done an amazing job with the company," she tells him. "It's become, like, hip to wear." "Thanks," he offers awkwardly.

Outside, Tomei has changed her pose. This time, she's lounging on the grass while her agent is pacing and shouting into her cell phone. "John Travolta and *who* else?" she barks. Again, Krakoff is circulating on the perimeter as stylists sweat over which Fortune Cookie bag deserves the limelight. "The way I see it is that we have really gotten into the game. I'd love to do a hotel," he muses, "all in Coach leather." (Prada, are you listening?) "There's only so long people can say to you, 'Wow, it looks so good—for Coach.' " ■

Photographed by Patrik Andersson

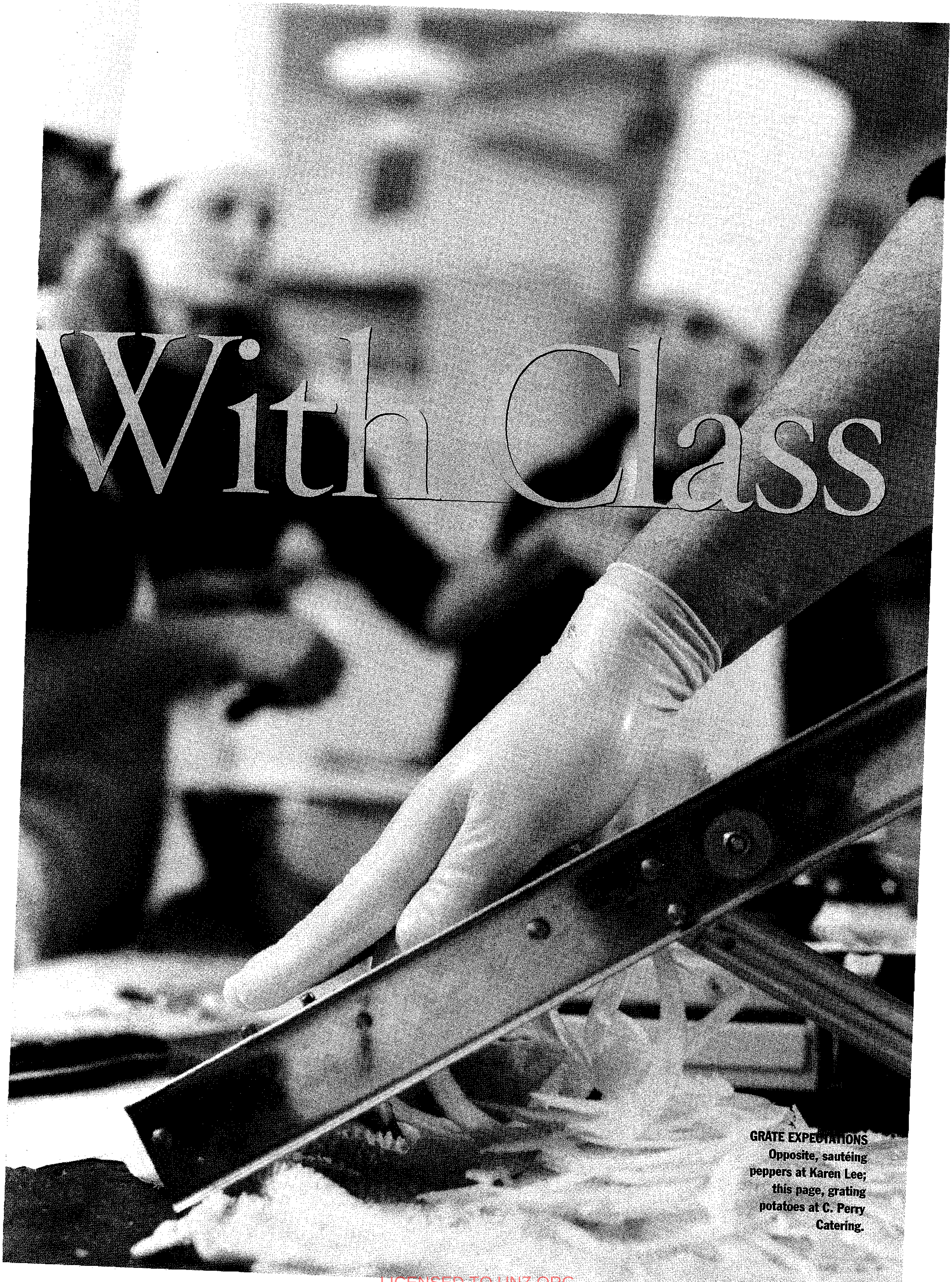


Cooking

Tired of looking like an amateur in your own kitchen? You've come to the right place. Restaurant-rich New York is also replete with chefs ready to instruct you in every kind of culinary feat, and some of them even make house calls. Here, a full-course menu of the city's best cooking classes. BY RUTH J. KATZ

Photographed by Robert Wright

With Class



GRATE EXPECTATIONS Opposite, sautéing peppers at Karen Lee; this page, grating potatoes at C. Perry Catering.

It's an oft-repeated truism that New Yorkers don't cook. With small kitchens and big careers, Manhattanites haven't the time or the space to make their own beef stock. Instead of clipping recipes, they save reviews of new restaurants, and being a foodie means knowing what wine to order with the lamb's-tongue salad at Babbo. • Like all urban myths, this one does contain a kernel of truth. Seasoned by the hurlyburly cultural stew of Manhattan life, we sometimes feel like we're missing out on the deeper satisfactions of the hearth. The irony is that while living in the city makes it easy to not cook at all, it also affords the widest range of choices for those who choose to learn. The same set of circumstances that makes New York the restaurant capital of the world also makes it the only place in the world where you have such a wide range of culinary courses to select from. • To get a taste of what classes are available, I chopped, diced, kneaded, and braised my way through more than 200 hours of cooking classes. Here is a menu of the very best.

A RANGE OF ONE'S OWN

If you enjoy the camaraderie of the classroom but have no interest in returning to school, consider a private teacher with his or her own space. Classes are usually intimate, kitchen setups professionally equipped, and prices affordable.

Karen Lee

Main ingredients: In addition to being a passionate instructor, Lee is a veritable kitchen sorcerer (she could turn a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich into a four-course prandial delight). Aprons, clipboards, pencils, and soothing ginger tea are provided. Her tasty, always health-conscious recipes (she's written five cookbooks) are inventive and draw heavily on Asian-fusion influences. She tends to pepper her heavily subscribed classes with all kinds of information—an off-the-cuff formula for applesauce, for example, or how to season a wok—so there's never a dull moment. But when she hits her stride, her expansive pedagogic style sometimes reverts to a staccato rhythm, reducing a process to its most rudimentary components: "Chicken, dice, spice, poach, eat." If only life were so simple.

Signature dish: I took three classes with her and am still salivating over the lively fall vegetarian stew, brimming with rutabagas, parsnips, and squash; her carrot-and-rice purée; her pungent barbecued spareribs, and her ability to render plain pork roast or turkey breasts ambrosial. Other delights: mustard-crusted halibut, and sautéed sole and scallops with spicy red-pepper sauce.

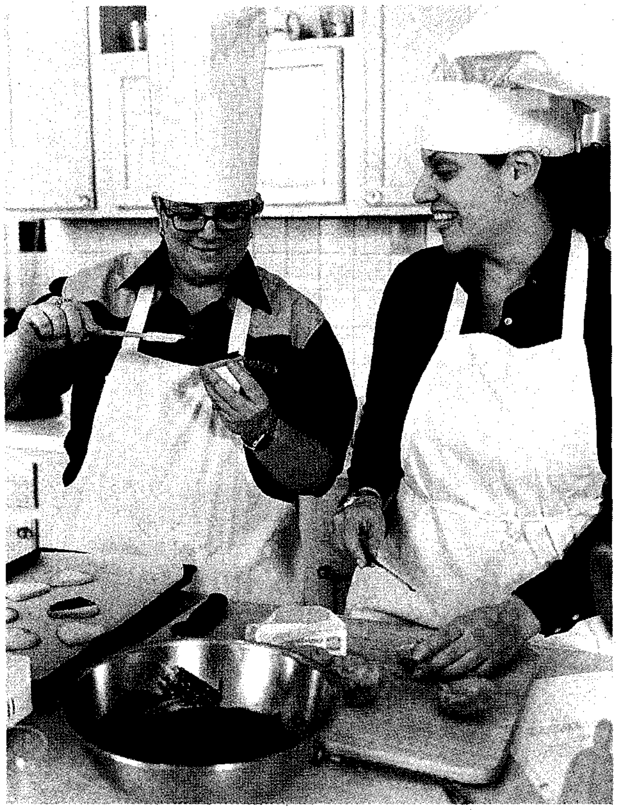
Details: 142 West End Avenue, Apartment 30V (212-787-2227); Mondays 6 to 9 P.M., and Wednesdays or Thursdays 11 A.M. to 2 P.M.; weekend intensive class, Saturday and Sunday 11 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. Prices: $135 per class, $490 for a series of four; intensive classes, $350. Limit ten students.

C. Perry Catering

Main ingredients: I joined two classes at Cheryl Perry's modest Lower East Side loft—a Jewish-singles night and an all-girl birthday party. The singles were clearly new to the food game—one young man eyed a hunk of fennel and proclaimed, "I don't even know what that is"—but some of the birthday celebrants exhibited pretty sharp knife skills. Both classes were evenly paced and genial; Perry always has a kitchen assistant or two helping her, so no question goes unanswered. And although she is a caterer, her kitchen is centered around a single four-burner stove just like the one in your apartment, so you have no excuse for failure when you try her recipes at home.

Signature dish: Perry's original recipes are diverse and easy to follow. Although she trained in the Chef's Program at the Natural Gourmet, her culinary reach extends well beyond standard vegetarian. The singles made boneless lamb in a mustard crust accompanied by a delicious leek-purée-for-dummies and a subtly spiced butternut-squash-and-apple bisque; the other class made a fiery Latin meal of salsa romesco, white-bean salad with gremolata, and tortilla with chorizo and manchego cheese, complemented by a more buttoned-down arugula, orange, raisin, and pine-nut salad.

ON THE LAMB Above, roasted rack of lamb, potatoes, and asparagus, a typical homework assignment for Zoë's "Cooking for Two" class; opposite, Cheryl Perry watches over a student chef.



Perry's kitchen **features a four-burner stove just like the one in your apartment, so you have no excuse for failure when you try her recipes at home.**

Details: 115 Allen Street, Suite 2 (212-777-2189); schedules vary; classes last three or four hours. Create your own group, or Perry will put one together; ("stock" party menus include "Five Easy Pizzas" and "Valentine's Baking: The Art of the Tart"). Price: $65 to $75; "Techniques" class, $225. Perry also hosts a "Cookbook Club" on the first Monday of each month, which engineers each meal around a tome (they read biographies and novels, too); $70 per four-hour class and meal, with a three-session commitment.

Julie Sahni's Indian Cooking School

Main ingredients: There are 35 varieties of salt used in Indian cooking, and after a single class you'll have sampled at least a dozen. You'll also learn how to smell spices properly, by crushing them between your fingers, as Sahni delivers a lecture on the chemistry of spicing an Indian meal. Sahni's tidy vest-pocket-size kitchen is cleverly rigged to maximize space (she was trained as an architect). Yellow-lidded plastic containers house staple bulk items while countless diminutive spice bottles are aligned like peewee soldiers on shelves, ready for action. Several hours of each class are spent shopping in an Indian grocery. Participants study various regional cooking—Mughul, Brahmin, and Jain—and a half-day is devoted to baking poori, chapati, and other breads. We ate what we cooked while absorbing Sahni's encyclopedic knowledge (the lowest temperature for a tandoori oven, she told us, is 700 degrees) and watching her work the "Indian food processor," a 375-pound granite mortar and pestle that sits in her living room. Students take home a detailed notebook with dozens of recipes. Book early, as aficionados vie for seats.

Signature dish: Although menus may vary seasonally, you can bank on making ghee (clarified butter, an Indian kitchen staple), Indian cheese from lemon juice and milk, a half-dozen breads and pilafs, and some intoxicatingly sumptuous main dishes, such as tamil shrimp with coconut or chettinad chicken sauté with tamarind, and some condiments like tomato-garlic chutney or frozen tamarind cubes.

Details: 101 Clarke Street, Brooklyn (718-625-3958); weekend course, Saturdays 9 A.M. to 5:30 P.M., Sundays 9 A.M. to 7:30 P.M.; weekday course, Tuesday through Thursday 9 A.M. to 5:30 P.M., Friday 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. Prices: weekend course, $1,095; weekday course, $1,595. Limit, three students.

Anna Teresa Callen's Italian Cooking School

Main ingredients: Cookbook author and teacher Anna Teresa Callen's maxim, repeated throughout each class, is: "A recipe is only a trampoline—a jumping-off point. Be creative." (Still, even she has clear limits: "You can put anything you want on a pizza—but please, not kiwi.") Students range from the totally green—a young Asian woman who wants to learn to cook for her kosher-observant husband—to the seasoned pro: Dan Leader, the owner of Bread Alone; Grace Balducci Doria, of Grace's Marketplace; and Louis Balducci, of Agata & Valentina, have all been pupils.

Classes are lively and relaxed. Even during the more formal parts of the teaching, she digresses often, dispensing pointers on how to make bread crumbs, burnish a copper pot to a reflective shimmer, or store porcini (add peppercorns to the container to discourage bugs). Each student has his or her own workstation, with a knife and cutting board, on the long countertop.

Signature dish: The food? In Dan Leader's words, it's "honest, simple, delicious." Her drunken cauliflower—soaked with wine and baked—couldn't be easier and provided a nice counterpoint to an uncomplicated roast chicken. Dishes included her bracing gamberi tonnati (shrimp with tuna sauce) and an elegant and complexly flavored minestra Abruzzese (vegetable soup), dubbed simply *il cardone* ("burdock") by cognoscenti of that region. And her flourless torta di nocciole e cioccolata—hazelnut-and-chocolate cake—is so blissfully rich it ought to be deemed a controlled substance.

Details: 59 West 12th Street (212-929-5640). Mondays 6 to 9 P.M. (you'll inevitably stay later, supping and sipping—Callen often has to throw her students out). Price: $675 for five nights. Limit, six people.

Italian Traditions

Main ingredients: For two weeks every fall and spring, this program's two presiding chefs, Rossella Grillo and Maria Consiglia Nappi, arrive in town from their native Italy. Rossella cooks with the northern flair and flavor of the Veneto, while Maria, from Naples, produces a hardier, more peasantlike fare; the result is a well-rounded Stateside tour of Italian cuisine. It's an expensive class, compared with others of similar format, but the price is justified by the small class size and above-average wines served with the sit-down meal (made all the more festive by the presence of the chefs' family members). Most important, the recipes will leave your favorite Italian cookbook in the dust.

Signature dish: A typical class meal might include polpettine di melanzana, gnocchi al pesto, insalata di mare, arrosto di maiale in crosta di patate, pepperoni alla Napoletana, and tirami su.

Details: Location and schedule vary (212-545-1154). Prices: $175 per three-hour session. Limit, ten students.

HAVE WHISK, WILL TRAVEL

There are plenty of itinerant chef-instructors who will come to your home, whether for a one-on-one lesson or a group class. Even teachers with their own spaces will make house calls on request, so it pays to ask. And if you organize and host the class, you might get free tuition.

Suki Hertz

Main ingredients: "I'm your personal trainer in the kitchen—for your heart and well-being," proclaims Hertz, the only registered dietician I encountered during four semesters of cooking classes. Educated at the New York Restaurant School and the Natural Gourmet and armed with a master's degree in nutrition from NYU, Hertz also worked for years as a restaurant line cook. She now specializes in private lessons, with an emphasis on nutritional counseling and learning to cook healthfully. Hertz doesn't offer many of her own recipes (most were from other chefs and authors); here the focus is on technique.

Another thing that separates Hertz from the rest of the pack is that she provides a breakdown, hour by hour, of what needs to be done when, so that students develop a sense of timing. She's an affable, laid-back instructor who tailors her class menus to the client's needs, which makes this a great class for those learning to live with dietary restrictions. One couple came looking for a repertoire of eight to ten delectable and healthy meals they could reliably reproduce, sans Suki, for dinner guests. So far, they have mastered a Sicilian fish stew.

Signature dish: In one private class, we made crunchy and spicy cheddar palmiers to munch as we prepared a Moroccan feast, including savory game hens, an artichoke-and-preserved-lemon salad, Tunisian harissa, and a low-fat lemon-ginger ice cream. In another, we prepared butternut-squash risotto, a toothsome grilled-vegetable medley, and feisty banana-mango crêpes with ginger sauce and raspberries.

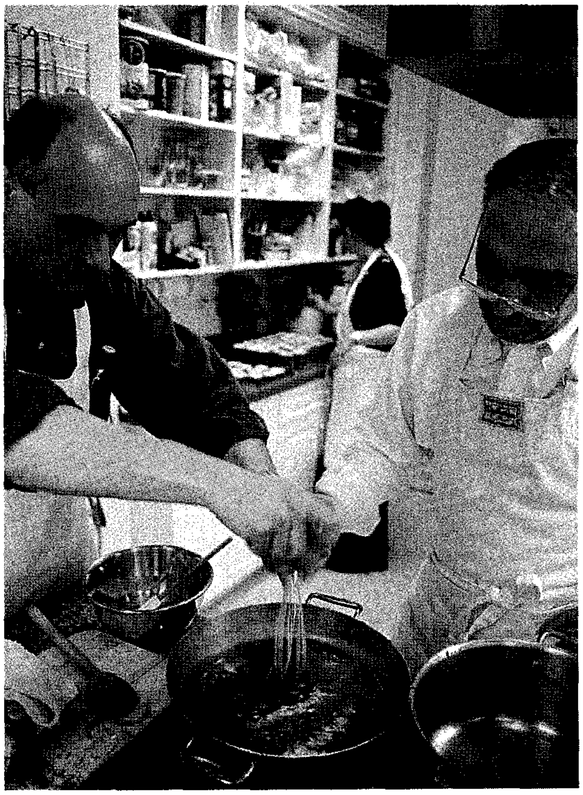
Details: Call 212-946-6546. Prices: $75 per hour per student; food is additional, and generally runs about $100. Limit, three students.

Stephen Schmidt

Main ingredients: Schmidt can be a purist. "I never even look at margarine! I'm appalled by it," he bellows. "I think they should ban it." We couldn't agree more. But he'll readily teach his class less egregious alternatives to tradition, such as how to make an intense sauce without stock. A former Queens College English instructor, Schmidt is a much better lecturer than your average chef. He provides a master shopping list for participants (something few teachers do), who generally do the shopping before his arrival. Still, he is likely to arrive with a surprise treat, as he did on one occasion, bearing crackers and home-made clotted cream for us to savor while we got started. He's a marvelous baker and author of a handy kitchen Baedeker, *Master Recipes*.

Signature dish: In one class we produced an extravagant Christmas feast, with a tender, standing prime-ribs roast, accompanied by a vibrant salad of roasted pears, Port-infused figs, and walnuts, and a hearty potato-onion-and-bacon pie. In another class, we whipped up a feisty banana-caramel cobbler with a pecan-biscuit crust.

Details: Call 212-369-3697. Prices: $500 per three-to-four-hour class, plus food costs of about $15 per person. Limit, fifteen students.



Peter Berley

Main ingredients: Berley has a genius for health-oriented, modern vegetarian. He will, however, teach meat and fish dishes, as well as healthy desserts ("a natural extension of the meal"); he wrote the curriculum and helped create the recipes for the sixteen classes that constitute the core program at the Natural Gourmet, and his new cookbook, *The Modern Vegetarian Kitchen* (Regan Books/HarperCollins) comes out this week. He's an enthusiastic and generous teacher who tends to keep talking long after the bell rings.

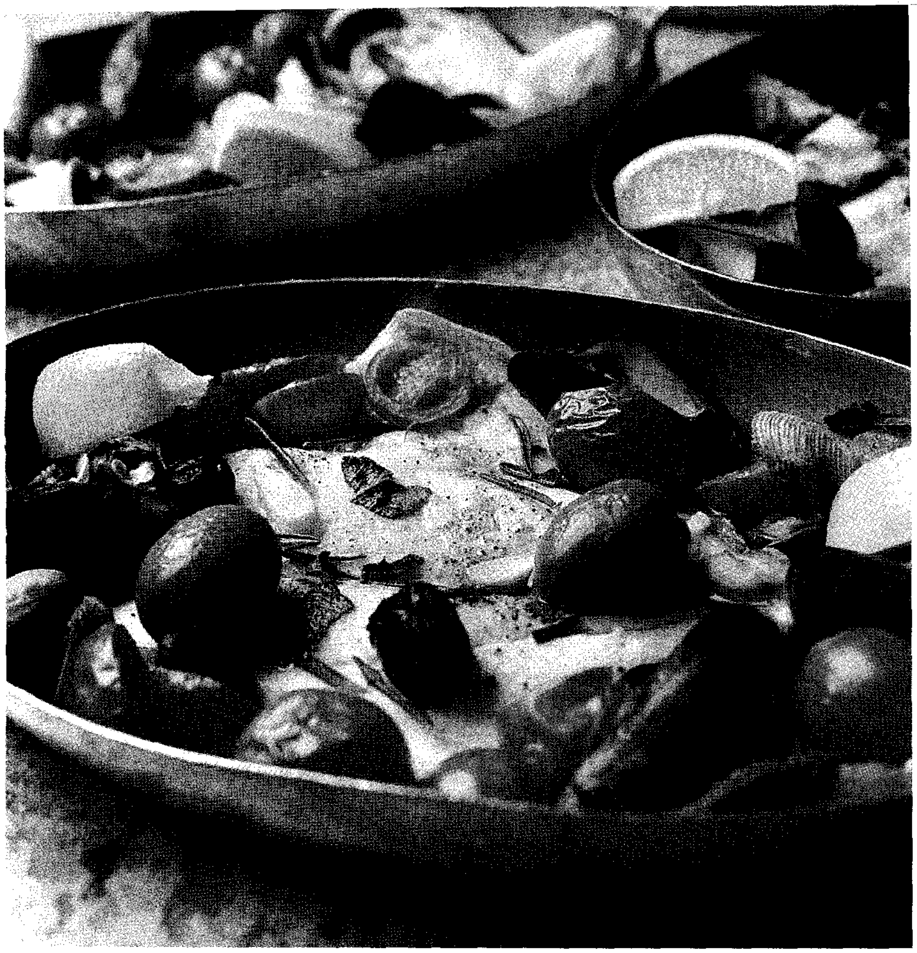
Signature dish: Our menu consisted of pumpkin pâté with pita crisps; mushroom turnovers; endive stuffed with tofu, olives, and capers; three-grain pilaf; chickpea-and-vegetable tagine; and roasted pears with caramel sauce.

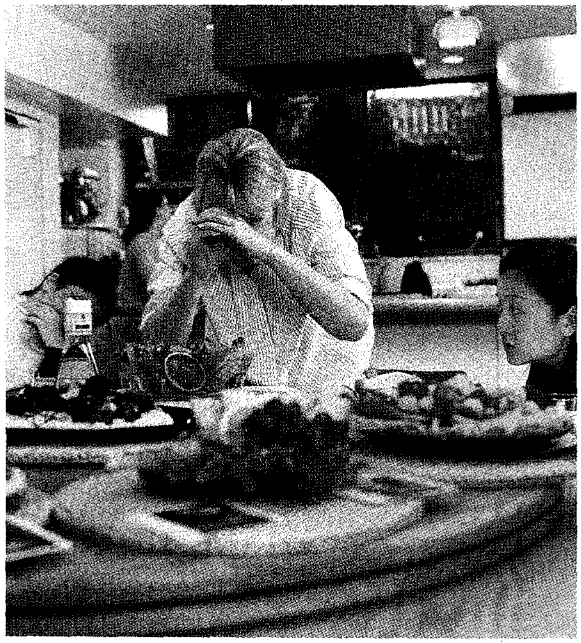
Details: Call 914-674-0589. Prices: $125 per person for a three-to-four-hour class, with a four-person minimum (includes food costs). Limit, eight students; Berley will help assemble groups.

Stephen Schmidt **can be a purist. "I never even look at margarine. I am appalled by it," he bellows. "I think they should ban it."**

Jeri Jackson of DeLoach Delectables

Main ingredients: Using all her own appetizing recipes, Jeri Jackson's classes reflect a healthful approach to food. (Her background includes study at the New York Restaurant School, the Natural Gourmet, and the legendary La Varenne in France.) I attended a class for three couples in a private home. One of the husbands had just returned from the Pritikin Longevity Center, and his medical marching orders dictated low-fat meals, so this class was devoted to nutritious "healthy heart" cooking. Jackson spent a good hour lecturing before the hands-on part of the lesson; in the kitchen, she shared countless tidbits and shortcuts, from how to shred cabbage to how to fold a smart parchment envelope





EYES ON THE PRIZE Clockwise from left, a food-styling class at the New School; Stephen Schmidt with a student; Tuscan Square students learn to make orata allo scoglio, which contains fish, olives, tomatoes, and mussels.

for poaching fish. She planned a rather ambitious meal for this group; if the husbands had been as adept in the kitchen as the wives, we would have sat down to eat an hour earlier.

Signature dish: The tasty borscht with dill-tofu "sour cream" was a healthful substitute for what my grandmother used to make, and the rest of the meal—poisson en papillote, roasted seasonal vegetables, sautéed broccoli rabe, and scrumptious poached pears in a sesame crust—was filling, nutritious, and delectable.

Details: Call 212-864-0778 to schedule. Prices: $150 per three-hour session for individual private lessons, plus $50 to $100 for food, and $25 to shop with or for client; $500 per three-hour session for six-to-eight-person group lessons, plus $50 to $100 for food, shopping included.

RESTAURANTS

Many savvy restaurateurs have realized that in the downtime hours of mid- to late afternoon, their staff and facilities can be used for cooking classes. While most of these "tutorials" offer minimal hands-on experience, they provide a precious back-of-the-house glimpse of a professional workspace, as well as an intimate opportunity to dish with the (sometimes celebrity) chef.

Zoë

Main ingredients: If you get a voyeuristic thrill from observing a working restaurant kitchen, you'll thoroughly enjoy the classes at this New American eatery in the SoHo district. Classes are held under the whisk of executive chef Kevin Reilly at the bar-height chef's counter, so even the worst seat provides a great view. In every one of my classes here, we ate and sipped (the restaurant's wine director and co-owner Scott Lawrence pours excellent wines and expounds a little on each) like aristocrats and even took home generous doggie bags. In addition, co-owners Thalia and Stephen Loffredo distribute handsome, embroidered Zoë aprons; they won't turn you into Reilly, but he always takes phone calls from students. Really.

Signature dish: Topics reflect what's fresh at the market. In one summer class on grilling, Reilly made a grilled-vegetable gazpacho with lime crème fraîche; an aromatic Chilean sea bass with a warm-asparagus salad, charred-grapefruit sauce, and balsamic glaze; followed by a whole sirloin with a crushed-Vidalia-onion relish. The November class, which produced a holiday banquet, netted a recipe for a crackling-good corn-bread stuffing.

Details: 90 Prince Street (212-966-6722); Classes are held Wednesdays, October 4, November 8, and December 6. Prices: $55 per session. Proceeds go to City Harvest.

Miette Cooking School

Main ingredients: For years, Mariette Bermowitz held classes at Tartine, a beloved Village bistro. Classes were relaxed, almost breezy, as pupils donned well-worn aprons and repaired to individual cutting boards to work on chef Paul Vandewoude's eclectic mix of French country fare. Right now, Bermowitz is searching for a new permanent space, but this friendly, well-priced operation is worth waiting for.

Signature dish: A typical Miette menu is a simple one- or two-pot affair—for example, couscous with chicken and cumin; baked Gorgonzola polenta; crêpes and crème fraîche; pumpkin-and-green-apple bisque; or salmon steak with ratatouille and basil sauce. Bermowitz says that Vandewoude has accumulated volumes of recipes, and she is only now, after four years, beginning to repeat herself.

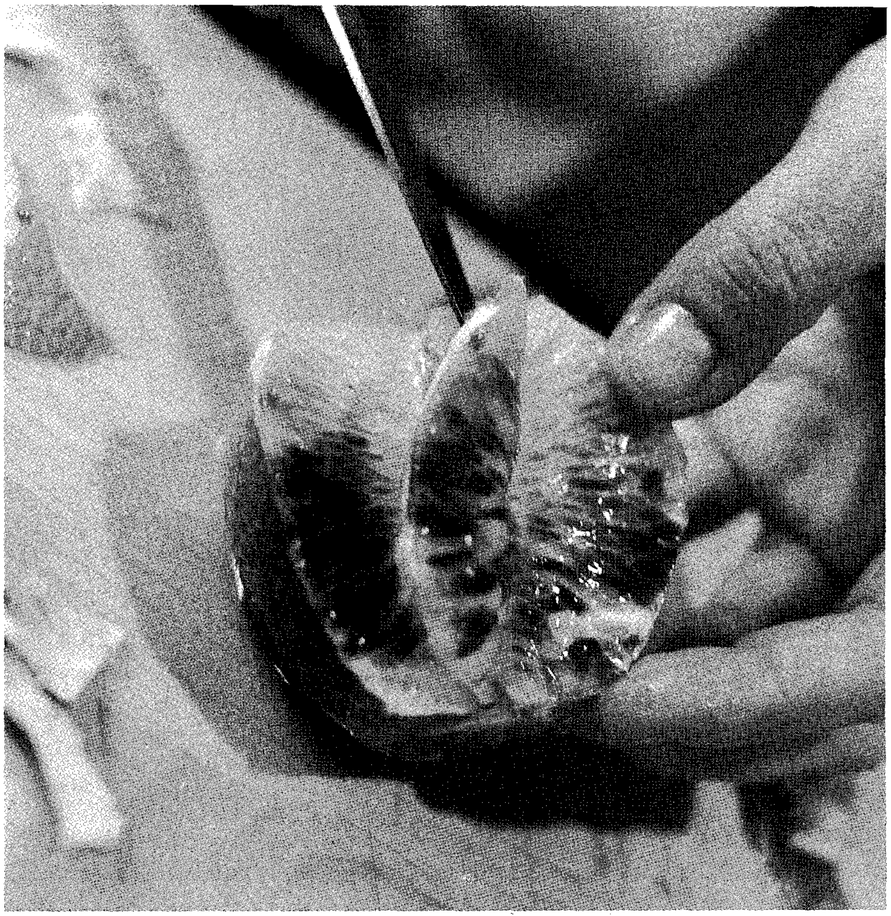
Details: Call 718-336-4009 for schedule. Price: $45 per session.

Tuscan Square

Main ingredients: Lots of larger schools with professional facilities offer cooking sessions to corporations looking to show their harried employees a good time. Tuscan Square, with its spacious, well-designed lower level and a ten-to-one student-to-staff ratio, is one of the few restaurants that can do so on a regular basis. The menu is fixed and showcases the zestful native cuisine that is the hallmark of Pino Luongo's eateries. The tariff is a little steep, but if the boss is footing the bill, who cares?

Signature dish: Students begin with a cocktail reception with abundant hors d'oeuvres (such as tuna tartare, assorted pizzas, and codfish croquettes) and then break into groups; some prepare a variety of mozzarella dishes for a first course while others labor over the main dish, which is usually either a seafood stew or house polpette (chicken-and-ricotta meatballs). The restaurant also offers an evening of pasta-making (papardelle or ravioli) that finishes with a dessert of tirami su.

Details: 16 West 51st Street (212-462-1001); call for schedule. Price: $115, plus the cost of alcohol, tax, and 20 percent gratuity, and an additional charge of $100 per chef. Limit, 80 students on the lower level, or 120 in the ground-floor main restaurant.



OLD-SCHOOL STYLE

There's something to be said for bureaucracy. Unlike some mom-and-pop shops, large, full-service institutions maintain set schedules and locations, possess professional-grade kitchens, and offer a varied curriculum.

The New School Culinary Arts Program

Main ingredients: Guests of the Inn on 23rd Street, a bed-and-breakfast in Chelsea, really lucked out when the New School's Culinary Arts Program began leasing the Inn's kitchen facilities; breakfast is now apt to include biscuits from Stephen Schmidt's baking class. Fairly similar to the school's former Greenwich Avenue facility (but a tad roomier), the new kitchen has a mix of home and professional equipment. The school's signature seven-foot-wide round dining table made the move, and it continues to foster a convivial atmosphere during the class meal. I took six in-house classes here and attended two off-site "behind-the-scenes" courses at local restaurants, one at Tropica Restaurant and the other at the Hudson River Club. The high quality of the instruction on-site was consistent, and in every class I attended, the teachers all used their own recipes. (After I spent several months researching this article, Low-Fat Sauces with Arlyn Hackett was a very handy course to have under my ever-tightening belt.)

Signature dish: In Home Entertaining: Buffet, the class learned handy tips like why to use more acidic foods for a buffet (cuts down on potential bacteria) and to squeeze lemon on cut apples (so they don't oxidize and turn brown). In How to Boil Water with Michael Krondl, I coasted through some basic grilling (vegetables and a pleasant tuna steak) and topped the meal off with a sophisticated hazelnut roll cake with coffee-cardamom whipped cream.

Course catalog: It's hard to go wrong with any cooking class at the New School, and there are close to 200 to choose from, including the very basic (Knife Skills), the arcane (For Pumpkin Lovers Only), classic favorites (A Provençal Dinner Party), and seasonal specifics (Czech Christmas Cookies).

Details: 131 West 23rd Street (212-255-4141). Prices: About $80 for one three-hour class; about $2,500 for 25 four-hour sessions of the master-class series; food costs are separate and can range from $15 to several hundred dollars.

Natural Gourmet Institute for Food and Health

Main ingredients: Even if you don't know the difference between an antioxidant and a flavonoid, you'll still enjoy the nutrition- and healing-oriented classes offered here. The mainstream staff, led by Diane Carlson (a fabulous teacher), can turn discussions of aduki, Anasazi, and mung beans into cocktail-party chatter. The school's kitchens recently underwent a desperately needed stem-to-stern renovation and are now state-of-the-art. Most classes have minimal participation, but there are several each term that are totally hands-on. Students come from a wide range of ages, backgrounds, and culinary sophistication.

Signature dish: I took several hands-on classes, including Basics of Healthy Cooking, in which we prepared a surprisingly feisty and densely rich split-pea soup (without benefit of ham hocks or grand shank); in Healthy Chinese Cooking, we made a fantastic tea-and-orange-smoked salmon and crispy vegetable spring rolls with an Oriental dipping sauce; in Vegan Holiday Desserts, we made an un-cheesecake (not quite Junior's, but passable), and a succulent poached pear in pastry.

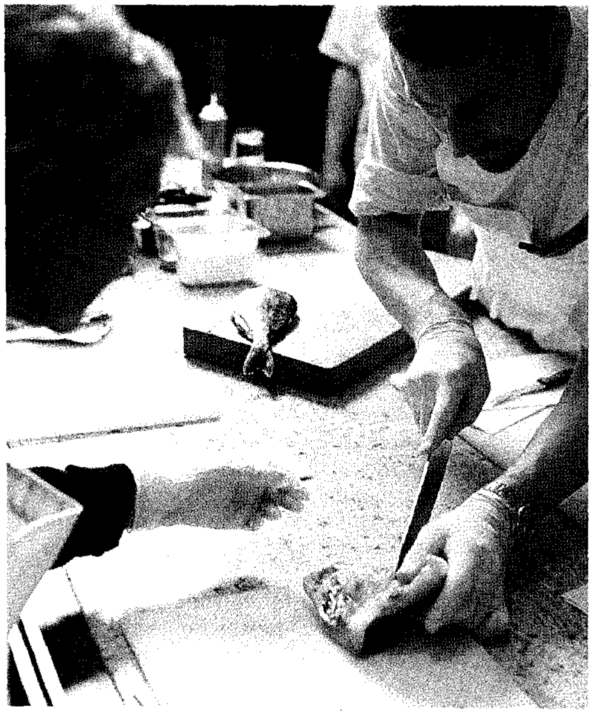
Course catalog: The school now offers more than 50 classes each semester. Interesting and reasonably priced, they span a wide range of topics, from the esoteric (A-Maize-ing Grain) to the prosaic (No Hassle Winter Soups) to the therapeutic (Sugar Blues), and are packed with wisdom and wit ("Berried Treasure"

Cooking by the Seat of Your Pantry).
Details: 48 West 21st Street, second floor (212-645-5170). Prices: $25 (Staying Healthy in New York City) to $90 (a four-hour course, Harvesting the Sea's Bounty: Introduction to Shellfish) to $150 (a two-day class on soy); skeptics are advised to check out the five-course vegetarian meal, served every Friday at 6:30 P.M.; fee is $25, BYOB. Limit, 16 students for hands-on classes, 20 for partial-participation classes, 30 for lectures.

Cooking by the Book

Main ingredients: When Suzen and Brian O'Rourke moved back to New York a decade ago, they wanted to find a way to meet people. "We figured people who liked food and cooking would be nice," says Suzen. Out of that grew a cooking-class empire (with a huge chunk of their business now coming from Fortune 500 team-building exercises), but it all still takes place in the kitchen of the downtown loft they call home. Each class showcases dishes taken from a recently released cookbook. The author is always in attendance, but teaching is done by the highly trained staff. Afterward, everyone sits down to share the meal the group prepared. My only complaint is that I would have liked greater interaction with some of the authors. Depending on the night, you may get stuck with a prima donna.
Signature dish: During an evening celebrating Michele and Charles Scicolone's book *Pizza: Any Way You Slice It,* I made dough for calzones. The "meal" we prepared with famed baker Nick Malgieri (director of the Pastry and Baking Arts Program at Peter Kump's), promoting his book *Chocolate,* was worth the trip to the dermatologist a week later: supernatural brownies, chocolate and vanilla trifles, champagne truffles, chocolate and coffee pots de crème, and coconut chocolate-chip bars.
Details: 11 Worth Street, third floor (212-966-9799). Prices: $85 to $125 for three-hour classes. Limit, twenty students; more may attend, particularly for corporate events, but the overflow crowd has to kill time in the dining room, schmoozing, drinking, and nibbling on the hors d'oeuvre, until their turns come up.

At Natural Gourmet, **we prepared a rich, feisty split-pea soup (without benefit of ham hocks) and an un-cheesecake (not quite Junior's, but passable).**



CUTTING REMARKS Opposite, Peter Berley demonstrates that blood oranges do not, in fact, bleed; above, at Tuscan Square, Patrick Nuti fillets a fish.

To Grandmother's House We Go Cooking Tours

Main ingredients: Susan Baldassano started this loosely cobbled "school" five years ago as a way to explore authentic ethnic cuisines with native cooks. Each class is held at the home of a "grandmother." (In practice, they're grandmothers the way Pino Luongo's "madri" are all mothers; in fact, one of Baldassano's grandmothers was a grandfather. No matter.) She's quick to caution that these classes are not about serious gourmet cooking in sparkling, spacious

The Pro Bowl

**MOST OF THE CLASSES LISTED IN THE ACcompanying story are aimed at the everyday foodie. But for those who want to experience the thrill of training alongside a future Matthew Kenney (graduate, French Culinary Institute), Claudia Fleming (Peter Kump), or David Burke (Culinary Institute of America), several of the area's main culinary colleges now offer classes to civilians.

The French Culinary Institute's (462 Broadway, near Grand Street; 212-219-8890) La Technique series (22 classes; Saturday 9:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M., or Tuesday–Thursday 5:30 P.M. to 10:30 P.M.; 110 hours; $4,600) was so popular when it was introduced a few years ago that the Institute has followed up with La Technique II (twelve classes, hours same as above, 60 hours, $1,975). Where the former left off with classic methodology, the latter picks up with *les points fins* of French cuisine. Shorter, less comprehensive classes include Chocolate Creations (ten classes; Tuesday to Thursday, 5:30 P.M. to 10:30 P.M.; 50 hours; $2,415), Essentials of Pastry (20 classes; Saturday, 9:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M.; 100 hours; $4,115), and the Art of International Bread Baking (which is divided into three two-week segments, Monday to Friday, 8:30 A.M. to 4 P.M.; $1,950 for one class or $4,900 for all three); students who complete the full six weeks earn Le Diplôme de Boulanger, which renders the recipient impervious to the insolence of all French waiters.

The serious avocational classes at **Peter Kump** (50 West 23rd Street; 212-847-0700) are legion; between 600 and 800 classes are offered throughout the year, each limited to about a dozen students. Most are single-session classes devoted to a specific topic or cuisine, such as Truffles, Truffles, Truffles (October 2, 10 A.M. to 3 P.M.; or November 30, 6 to 11 P.M.; $80) or the Food and Beer of Belgium (October 18, 6 P.M. to 11 P.M.; $95). But Kump also offers plenty of classes that focus on a specific technique, such as Cake Decorating ($510) or Techniques of Spa Cuisine ($485), which can be either spread out over five weeks or condensed into one.

The Culinary Institute of America (1946 Campus Drive, Hyde Park; 914-452-2230) will whip your cooking skills into stiff peaks with its weeklong Culinary Boot Camps (Basic Training, Baking and Pastry, or Advanced, $1,800 for the week; lodging not included). These hands-on courses tackle everything from fundamental knife skills to pairing beer and wine with Asian food. Three consecutive weekend classes are also available (including Smokin' and Roastin', October 7, 21, and 28, 9 A.M. to 3 P.M.; and World Class Breads, September 9, 16, and 30 and October 7, 21, and 28, 9 A.M. to 3 P.M.; $355 each), There's even a Kids Culinary College for children aged 8 to 11 or 12 to 15 ($150)—because, after all, every skilled chef can use an assistant.

AMANDA MAY

kitchens. "They are a journey," she says. "A tribute to the unsung heroines who have managed to somehow keep the art of traditional home cooking alive." The level of teaching isn't likely to be anywhere near what you'd get at the New School or Natural Gourmet (to compensate, Baldassano stands on the sidelines and often injects nonintrusive but appropriate pedagogic direction), but the dollar value is substantial, and classes are always fun. Baldassano is a former head chef at both Angelica Kitchen and the Whole Foods market and currently teaches in the Professional Chef's Program at the Natural Gourmet.

Course catalogue: So far, Baldassano has hosted grandmothers of Greek, Cuban, Jewish, Sicilian, Italian, Trinidadian, Appalachian, Syrian, Mexican, Indian, and Japanese descent.

Signature dish: In a class on Hungarian foods, we made a substantial pot of paprikas csirke with nokedli (chicken paprika with dumplings), to which we added seltzer, not water, since the instructor felt it made his dumplings lighter and fluffier. While exploring Middle Eastern traditions, we did a few valiant one-pot meals—lamb and okra, chicken with chickpeas—and appetizers and desserts.

Details: 471 17th Street, Apartment 1, Brooklyn (718-768-6197); call for schedule. Prices: $55 to $60 for four to five hours (including food costs).

PICKS AND PANS Above, Karen Lee's class receives hands-on training; opposite, Peter Berley, mid-lecture.

NYU School of Education Department of Nutrition and Food Studies/Continuing Education Program

Main ingredients: A few years ago, the academic culinary programs at New York University were completely restructured; as a result, the class roster has been greatly expanded. According to the department head, Dr. Marion Nestle, the university wants to give even the Continuing Ed courses a serious academic flavor. (Thus, sober classes on sports nutrition are offered alongside Demystifying Chocolate.) The newly overhauled kitchen facility is superb, with six restaurant ranges, eight sinks, half a dozen oversize stainless-steel work tables, and a complete pastry pavilion.

Signature dish: There were only seven of us in Suvir Saran's class on Indian cooking. As a result, we all got plenty of hands-on experience and lots to munch on, including the tapioca-and-peanut croquettes with just a whisper of coriander and chili peppers; dum aloo (white potatoes in spicy yogurt); and fried cauliflower.

Course catalogue: For those who already know how to boil water, NYU's avocational classes provide greater than average depth. Fall offerings include Small Gamebird Cookery, Endangered Cheeses, and Fish: A Fresh Look.

Details: 35 West 4th Street, tenth floor (212-998-5588). Prices: $50 to $100. Limit, 15 students for participation classes, 30 for lectures.

Italian Culinary Center

Main ingredients: A relative newcomer to the cooking-school scene, the Italian Culinary Institute is the year-old arm of the venerable Italian food magazine *La Cucina Italiana*. It offers theme nights and hands-on classes taught by staff editor Micol Negrin (an able instructor), and Cooking with the Stars, hosted by various guest chefs and authors. Representative topics include A Taste of Abruzzo (or Lombardy or Apulia), Medieval Cooking, and Vegetarian a l'Italia. Classes are taught in the magazine's sun-drenched test kitchen. The demo class I attended, Pestos and Sauces, was dense with information and moved along at a fast clip, but the students were quite food-savvy and easily kept pace, asking well-conceived questions. As at several restaurants where classes are staged, here, too, there is a wait staff, replenishing wine and water glasses.

Signature dish: Before class even begins, each table received an abundance of antipasti and bread. By the end of the night, I left stuffed and thoroughly enlightened, eager to replicate at home the half-dozen novel pestos I'd sampled, including a Ligurian walnut sauce, escarole-and-rosemary pesto, and a Sienese tarragon sauce.

Details: 230 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1100 (212-725-8764 or 888-742-2373). Prices: $65 per class; Cooking with the Stars is $75; nonmembers must pay a $5 fee. This November, the ICC is offering a week-long crash course on risotto, pastas, and sauces, taught by Negrin and Paulo Villoresi, the editor-in-chief himself, and Maurizio Marfoglia, the chef from Revel. (The class will be held November 6 through 10, 9 A.M. to 3 P.M.; $575 for members, $625 for nonmembers.)

Fairway

Main ingredients: If the store-brand olive oil (only $5.99) hasn't brought you to Fairway yet, maybe the $40 cooking classes will. Steven Jenkins, the store's resident cheese expert, instituted them last year and although classes can accommodate as many as 50 people, there's still a feeling of intimacy in the upstairs café where they convene. The setup is stadium-style, with an overhead mirror, so there's a decent sight line from every seat in the house. The roster is varied, and popular local chefs like Bill Telepan (JUdson Grill), Diane Forley (Verbena), or Henry Meer (Cub Room, City Hall) often take up the guest toque.

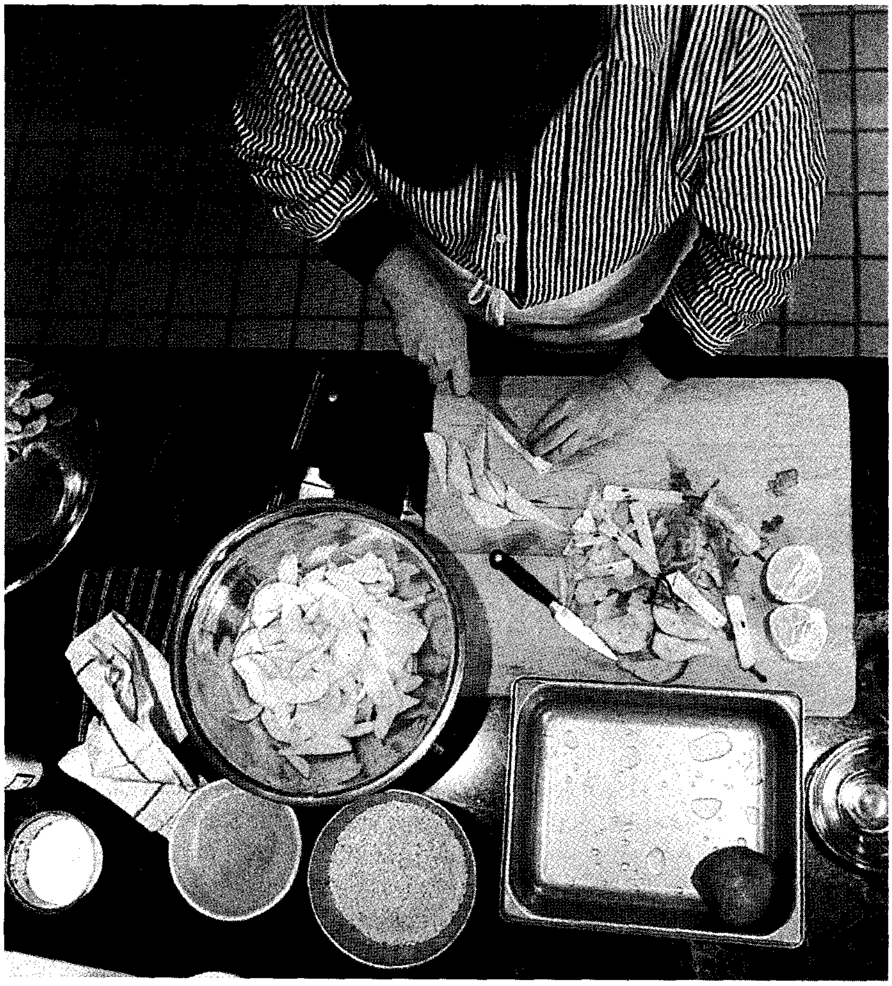
Signature dish: The feast began with a glorious portobello-mushroom carpaccio with bitter greens and Parmesan chips, followed by succulent Sonoma-lamb osso bucco and rosemary-and-garlic potatoes. Tart and tangy caramelized apples in a cloche puff pastry with a green-apple sauce topped it all off.

Details: 2127 Broadway, at 74th Street (212-595-1888); Wednesdays, 7:30 P.M., for about two to 2½ hours. Price: $40 including food and wine; proceeds go to Citymeals-on-Wheels.

De Gustibus at Macy's Herald Square

Main ingredients: Over the past twenty years, De Gustibus has seen more than 500 chefs tip their toques in its kitchen. As luck would have it, I got to attend a class taught by Mr. $500-a-Plate himself, Alain Ducasse, and I'm still drooling for his roast veal with vegetables in garlic-shallot butter. (And now, instead of trekking over to the Essex House, I can whip it up at home.) I also took Advanced Knife Skills, Pasta-Making, and Hors d'Oeuvres under the tutelage of less hyped but equally skilled star chefs. All four classes were top-flight, with plenty of attention from the chefs and staff (at least a half-dozen kitchen assistants are constantly buzzing about, organizing, cleaning, and helping to answer questions). Most of the 60-odd courses offered each semester are demonstrations and tastings. But the hands-on classes were my favorites.

I am still **drooling for Alain Ducasse's roast veal with vegetables in garlic-shallot butter (and instead of trekking to the Essex House, I can whip it up at home).**



Signature dish: Culinary styles vary by chef (recent teachers have included celebrated Chicago chef Charlie Trotter, the dessert king Jacques Torres, and the maestro Italiano Giuliano Bugialli). No matter what cuisine you crave, invariably there will be a class here to sate your palate. Happily, De Gustibus is generous with *amuse-bouches* to nibble on before class, with vino during meals, and with doggie bags.

Details: 151 West 34th Street, eighth floor (212-439-1714); call for schedule. Prices: $80 to $155 per session. Limit, 24 students per class.

The Sustainable Cuisine Project at the Earth Pledge Foundation

Main ingredients: Academic issues like genetically modified foods and natural-resource depletion may not sound like the sort of thing you'd take up in your spare time. But it doesn't have to be that way. At the Sustainable Cuisine Project, learning about the benefits of supporting local food producers, maximizing the use of ingredients when cooking, and making informed choices regarding what to eat can be fun as well as edifying. If the menu features a fish dish, then the opening discussion might focus on the fishing industry, endangered species, and the debate over farm-raised versus wild fish. The foundation's handsome turn-of-the-century carriage house features a well-equipped, open kitchen that can accommodate eight students.

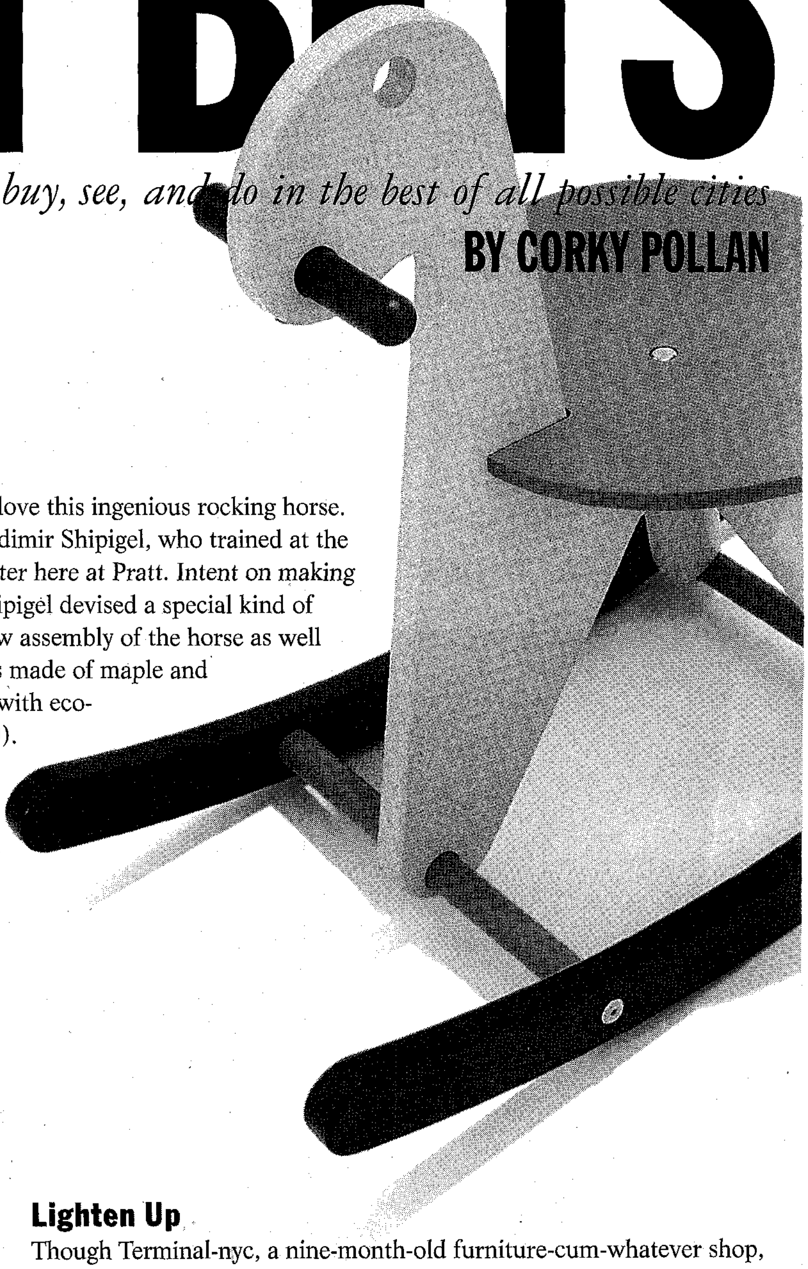
Signature dish: A few typical courses include butterflied leg of grass-fed lamb, grilled and served with an olive-caper sauce; homemade rosemary pasta; bourride of striped bass with tarragon aïoli; and roasted Comice pears with homemade caramel sauce or ginger tuile cookies. If this is what a sustainable planet tastes like, we're all for it.

Details: 149 East 38th Street (212-573-6968, extension 4); call for schedule. Price: $110, including wine. Limit, eight students. ▬

BEST BETS

The best of all possible things to buy, see, and do in the best of all possible cities

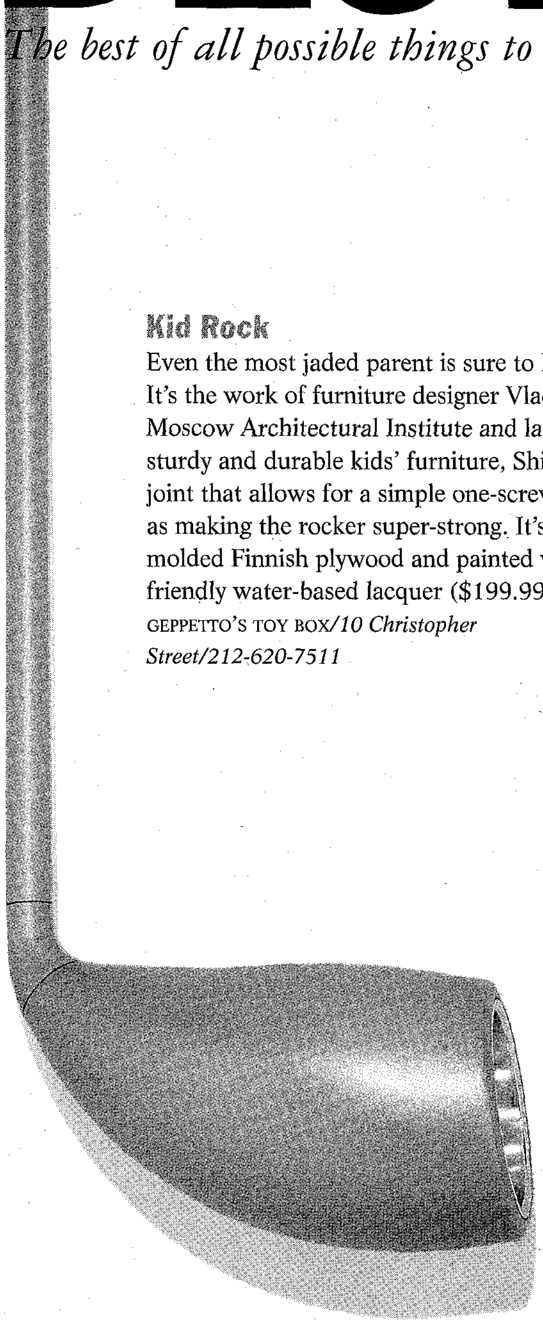
BY CORKY POLLAN



Kid Rock

Even the most jaded parent is sure to love this ingenious rocking horse. It's the work of furniture designer Vladimir Shipigel, who trained at the Moscow Architectural Institute and later here at Pratt. Intent on making sturdy and durable kids' furniture, Shipigel devised a special kind of joint that allows for a simple one-screw assembly of the horse as well as making the rocker super-strong. It's made of maple and molded Finnish plywood and painted with eco-friendly water-based lacquer ($199.99).

GEPPETTO'S TOY BOX/*10 Christopher Street/212-620-7511*



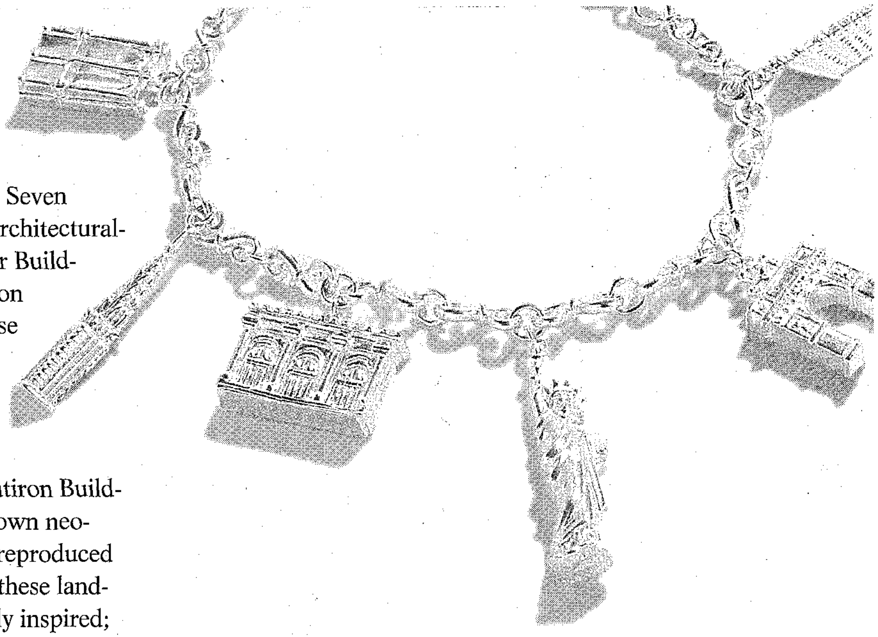
Lighten Up

Though Terminal-nyc, a nine-month-old furniture-cum-whatever shop, occupies only a tiny triangle on Watts Street, owners Tulya Madra and Banu Sahinoglu keep it well stocked with all manner of cutting-edge stuff. Among the ever-changing mix, you're likely to find Plastic Buddha's "Ugli" tables, Tarabox storage systems, Trash-a-Porter Tee-pillows, and Ozgen cement doorstops. But Turkish designer Yilmaz Zenger's sleek "360" hanging lights are always in residence. They rotate 360 degrees (hence the name), so they're great for spotlighting paintings, highlighting an *objet,* hanging over a dining table. The head is fiberglass, and the 29-inch arm is acrylic-painted metal ($300; in black, white, beige, and red, too).

TERMINAL-NYC/*28–30 Watts Street/212-219-3411*

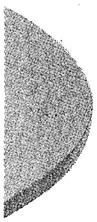
Photographed by James Worrell

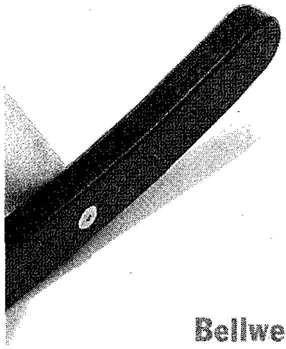
Send shopping questions to Corky Pollan, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999.



Charms of the City

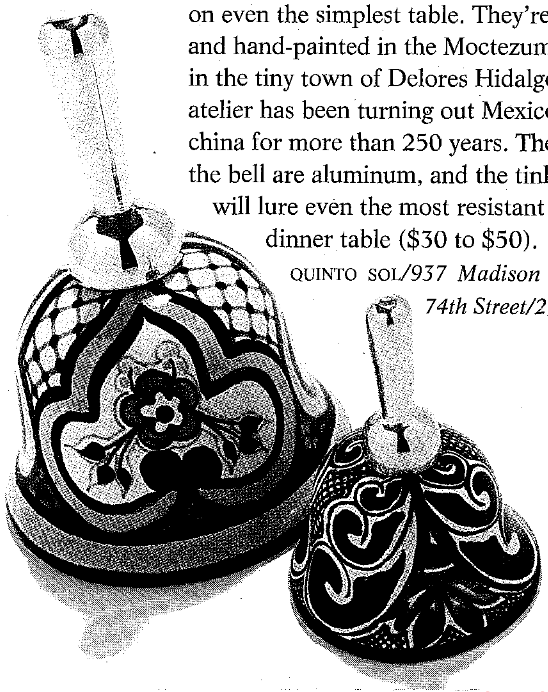
New York may not boast any of the Seven Wonders, but it's no slouch in the architectural-marvels department: Think Chrysler Building, Brooklyn Bridge, the Washington Square Arch. To commemorate these monuments the Metropolitan Museum of Art has come up with the Empire City charm bracelet. It's adorned with the above landmarks, along with a Statue of Liberty, a Flatiron Building, and a replica of the museum's own neoclassic East Wing, all meticulously reproduced in sterling silver. Even the bracelet these landmarks hang from was architecturally inspired; the curlicues are clones of the carved-stone ornamentation on the Met's north wall ($150).
METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART/*1000 Fifth Avenue, at 82nd Street/212-570-3894*





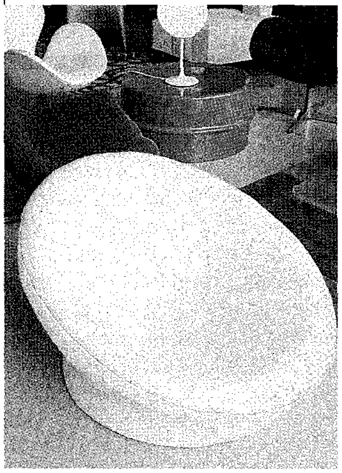
Bellwether

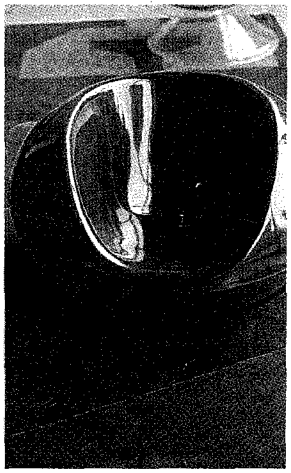
Dinner bells conjure up visions of butlers, tables set with glistening stemware, and gleaming silver. But forget the buffing and polishing—these festive bells would look right on even the simplest table. They're handmade and hand-painted in the Moctezuma workshop in the tiny town of Delores Hidalgo, and this atelier has been turning out Mexico's finest china for more than 250 years. The handle and the bell are aluminum, and the tinkly sound will lure even the most resistant kid to the dinner table ($30 to $50).
QUINTO SOL/*937 Madison Avenue, near 74th Street/212-734-5653*



A Safe Place

Jim Elkind of Lost City Arts knew he needed to rethink his showcase apartment; with his 6-month-old daughter growing ever more curious, its sharp-edged-glass tables, tubular-steel chaises, and tippable chairs were becoming an accident waiting to happen. Elkind set about making major changes in his own home, but he realized that other new parents were facing similar dilemmas. So Elkind put together a show of child-friendly pieces for his new Cooper Square emporium: chairs, tables, and sofas that kids can scamper over, under, and through without hurting themselves—or the furniture. Far from Ikea knockdowns, his picks are mid-century-modern classics. Some are vintage (like Aarnio's Pastille chair), others have been in continual production (Mourgue's Bouloum chaise), still others (Matsumoto's Tampopo chair) are new. (From $330 for a Phantom chair to $4,500 for a Lip sofa.)
LOST CITY ARTS/*18 Cooper Square/212-375-0500*





Photographed by Kenneth Chen.

Tweed Killers

Mild and woolly: *Softer than anything Harris ever imagined, these lightweight tweeds will carry you through the chilly season* **without a sweat.**

Heather report: From left, tweeds by A|X Armani Exchange, Kenneth Cole New York, Cynthia Steffe, Express, Reaction by Kenneth Cole, Banana Republic, and Old Navy.

WITH ALL THE RACY OFFERINGS FOR fall evenings, we're very pleased that preppy, casual tweeds are the ticket for day. And for once, tweed is *comfortable*—because this season's best comes in lighter fabrics that are sleek and easy to pull off, especially mixed with the solids in your closet. (Avoid head-to-toe tweed—it's snazzy in fashion spreads but can look like wall-to-wall carpeting in real life.) Cozy up to this trend with our sharp choices—they come at *way* less than Savile Row prices.

For work, throw a chunky turtleneck over **Banana Republic**'s lace-edged skirt ($118 at select Banana Republic stores) or **A|X Armani Exchange**'s trim, bootcut pants ($128 at A|X Armani Exchange stores). Or, for a dressier effect, try tailored pieces with leather accents. We're craving a splurge-worthy jacket by **Cynthia Steffe** ($268 at Olive & Bette's), a sharp little shell from **Kenneth Cole New York** ($98 at Bloomingdale's), and maybe even Cole's neat tubular handbag ($50 at Kenneth Cole stores).

Tweeds have always been a joy on chilly outdoor days—and this season, they're an essential part of a weekend wardrobe. Stock up on heathery sweaters in warm fall colors from **Express** ($39.50 each at Express stores), or at least pick up a country-chic **Old Navy** hat ($12.50 at Old Navy stores).

Picks of the Week

Bill Amberg, the fashion crowd's fave source for snazzy English bags, is clearing loads for about 70 percent off, from $20 for evening pouches to $150 for patchwork totes. *230 Elizabeth St. (212-625-8556); A.E., M.C., V.; Thurs. noon–8, Fri. noon–7, Sat. 10–6; 9/14–9/16.*

French Connection's sale has zillions of fall basics for men and women, priced at about 60 percent off, from $5 to $300. *Parsons School of Design, 560 Seventh Ave., at 40th St.; A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Thurs. 11–7, Fri. 9–6; 9/11–9/15.*

Antique Source, a Victorian jewelry showroom, is taking 30 to 60 percent off stock (from $29 for a pin to $1,500 for a gold bracelet). *271 Madison Ave., near 39th St., tenth floor (212-681-9142); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Fri. 10:30–6; 9/11–9/15.*

White + Warren's sale has hundreds of trendy fall sweaters and other luxurious knits—all for less than half-price. Chunky cashmere sweaters are $100–$200; wool ones are $60–$100. *80 W. 40th St., third floor (212-398-3295); A.E., M.C., V.; Thurs. 9–6, Fri. till 5; 9/14–9/15.*

Cerruti is clearing several lines of sleek men's and women's office clothes at less than half-price. Sizes XS–XL. *24 W. 40th St., first floor (212-278-0121); A.E., M.C., V.; Sun.–Sat. 9–6; 9/17–9/23.*

Truva's Turkish kilims are about a third off: Old ones are $279–$850; new ones are $49–$189. *58 Greenwich Ave. (212-462-4040); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Sat. 11–8, Sun. noon–7; 9/16–10/28.* ▬

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Shyama Patel, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, four weeks before the sale. Sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be given preference.

Additional reporting by Brooke Showell.

Photographs by Steve Wisbauer.

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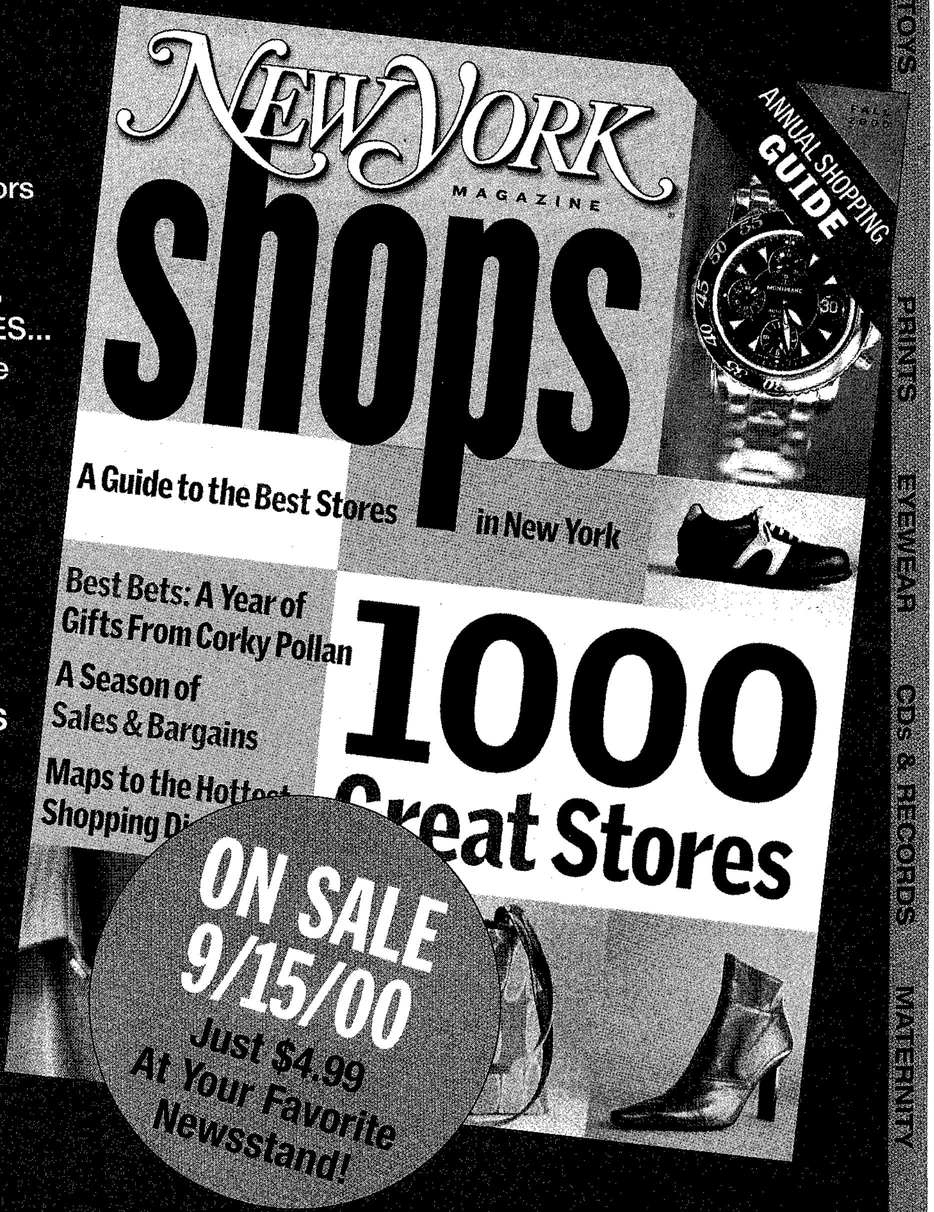
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North Hampton?

A sure sign that Ulster County is serious about becoming the next Hampton is the recent opening of the elegant Emerson Inn and Spa near Woodstock. Emboldened, perhaps, by recent Catskill arrivals like Uma 'n' Ethan, Kirsty Hume, Marc Anthony, and (rumor has it) Brad Pitt, the new luxury inn is luring customers with a 4,000-bottle wine room, an *après*-dinner cigar lounge with floor-to-ceiling humidor, and amenities like Frette linens, Limoges china, and Hermès toiletries. The restaurant is run by chef Gilbert Steiner, formerly of Paris's Tour d'Argent, and the Orient-inspired spa offers more than 40 services, from holistic massages to oxygen facials. This ain't your grandma's Catskills, so don't expect Shecky Greene to be headlining *anytime soon (914-688-7900; doubles start at $320).*

Dollars and Seine

SALE
$100
$20
$10

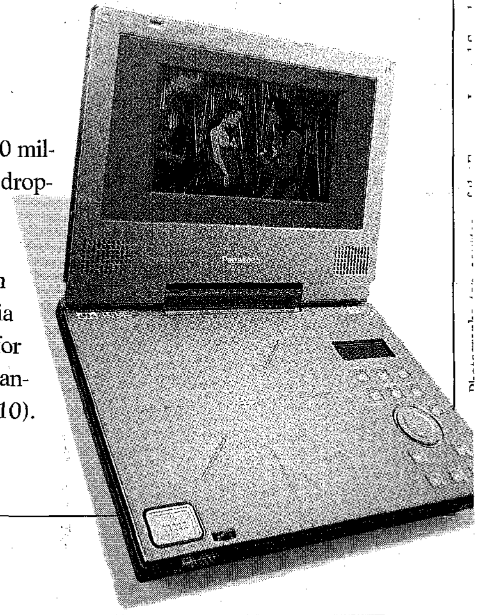
Franco-American exchange rates are so favorable right now, publishers should stamp NATIONWIDE SALE on this year's Paris guidebooks. In the past year alone, prices have dropped nearly 20 percent for Americans spending dollars—largely a result of the tumbling euro. A carré scarf from Hermès now costs $199 (compared with $236 last year); a night at the Ritz, $477 ($560 last year and $614 two years ago); and dinner for two at Arpège, around $210 ($253 last year). Even better, not everyone's caught on. There has not yet been a dramatic increase in the number of Americans traveling to France. "It takes a while for word to spread," explains Marion Fourestier of the French Tourist Office. "Plus, air fares have been a bit high." That's about to change, though: Off-season fares kick in later this month.

Olympic Hopefuls '02

The starting gun hasn't been fired at the Sydney Olympics yet, but it's not too early to think about booking a room for the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City. Tickets go on sale next month (they can be purchased online, starting October 10, at www.saltlakecity2002.com), and with 60 percent of the area's accommodations already reserved for athletes, officials, and the media, the time to act is now. Coldwell Banker (800-606-0453) is already offering single rooms in owner-occupied homes (from $125 per night) or entire owner-vacated houses (up to $5,000 per night); Salt Lake's Visitor Information Services (801-521-2822) will refer you to hotels with vacancies; and starting next month, Jet Set Sports is selling complete packages (877-222-2802; www.jetsetsports.com).

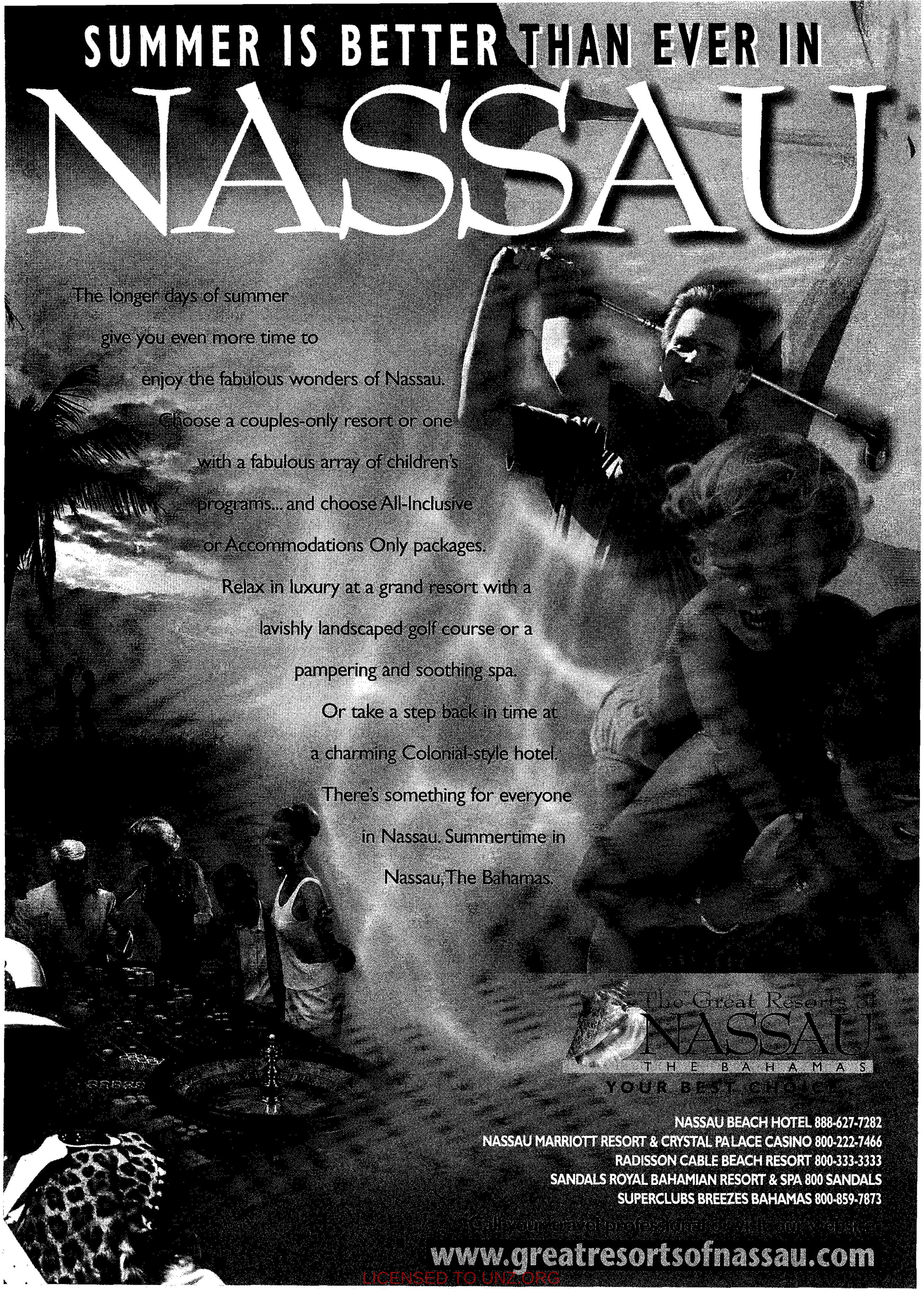
etc.

Place-lift: This month, Paris's Plaza Athénée hotel unveils a three-year, $30 million makeover, including an Alain Ducasse restaurant. If the euro keeps dropping, it might be cheaper to fly there for dinner than to dine with him here (33-1-53-67-66-67; doubles start at $508). . . . **High Concept:** Forget bad in-flight movies: Rent a DVD and portable Panasonic player for $10 before boarding, then drop them off when you land. InMotion Pictures is already at airports in seven cities; service comes to La Guardia this fall (877-DVD-TO-GO). . . . **Resort Redux:** Anguilla's Cap Juluca hotel—a favorite retreat for Hollywood couples—reopens October 28 after post-hurricane renovations. To celebrate, management is offering summer rates through December 17 (888-858-5822; doubles start at $310).



BY TARA MANDY

Illustration by Robert De Michiell



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MOVIES PETER RAINER

Rock-a-Bye Baby

Cameron Crowe's delicate coming-of-age film about a young writer on the road with an early-seventies rock band is sentimental without ever becoming sappy.

Kid rock critic: Patrick Fugit and Kate Hudson in *Almost Famous.*

CAMERON CROWE'S **Almost Famous**, SET MOSTLY in 1973, is a blissfully sweet coming-of-age movie in which everyone, young and less young, comes of age. William Miller (Patrick Fugit), the 15-year-old budding rock journalist, is the film's centerpiece, and he's a wide-eyed munchkin savant, a cherub in the Dionysian circus of rock and roll. He's so virginal he's comic; roving groupies take one look at him and can't wait to deflower him en masse, for the sport of it. On assignment to cover the touring up-and-coming Led Zeppelin–ish band Stillwater for *Rolling Stone*, William becomes its unofficial mascot. Russell Hammond (Billy Crudup), the lead guitarist, has the requisite hippie Jesus look, and he sees in William not only an acolyte but, as the relationship deepens, a musical soul mate as well. What unites these two is the ecstasy of knowing just how deep-down good rock music can make you feel. A teenage rock journalist in the seventies before writing the book *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* and getting into movies, Crowe still feels this ecstasy in his bones, which is why his movie looks vibrantly alive instead of shimmering with that phony nostalgic haze common to period films set in that era. But Crowe is also honest enough to recognize how intricately bound our feelings for rock are to our zig-zag attitudes about sex and pomp and rebellion and cool. It's the rock lifestyle as much as rock itself that is being celebrated here.

Crowe sprinkles a pinch of powdered sugar on that lifestyle, but this approach is preferable to being subjected to the usual litany of overdoses and whoring. He does indeed bring some of this material into the movie, just enough to make us feel its sting, but he's not trying for an exposé. (What's left to expose, anyway?) His movie is like a souvenir of personal memories that have been candied by time. Crowe's films, especially his first two as a writer-director, *Say Anything . . .* and *Singles,* have always displayed an unyielding affection and longing for family, and what he finds in the rock world of *Almost Famous* is the greatest of extended families, an orgy of companionship. William's single mom, Elaine (Frances McDormand), who thinks rock and roll is a doomy siren's call, is the Mother Courage of the piece. She's already driven away William's sister Anita (Zooey Deschanel), who bequeaths her record collection to her brother. Then, for the first time in his life, William also leaves home, to follow Stillwater. Elaine is a monster but a very human one; in her own Gorgon-like way she cares deeply about her son, and she's certainly not wrong to worry about the drugs and the sex. But her defiance, which exhibits a comically overheated, rock-stars-have-kidnapped-my-son paranoia, is partly what eggs him on, and she knows it. William may be a cherub, but he's also a chip off the old block. His errantry is a backhanded tribute to his mom's mettle.

Early on, William acquires a mentor, the rock critic Lester Bangs (Philip Seymour Hoffman, who may be the best character actor in America). It is Bangs, with his gonzo's radar, who immediately perceives what lies ahead for the boy. "You cannot make friends with the rock stars," he tells him. "Friendship is the booze they feed you." And yet friendship is what William craves even more than reputation, even more than music. Crowe doesn't take a hard-line attitude toward all this: The movie is saying that some things are more important than journalism, at least to the journalist. The puff and glitz that some writers churn out may be murderous to their profession, but castigating those writers is not what this movie is about. Who can fault William for "getting too close" to his subject? *Almost Famous* isn't about the making of a great rock scribe (which Lester Bangs emphatically was). It's about how rock and roll messes you up and brings you into a new relation with yourself. Besides, William manages to deliver the goods: His story on Stillwater for *Rolling Stone,* which both he and the band at first regard as a betrayal, is an uncensored tribute to their shared spree.

Crowe brings out the emotional levels in William's odyssey. The boy's almost palpable need for a father figure is fulfilled by the yin and yang of Lester and Russell.

Photograph by Neal Preston.

Somehow William manages to reconcile himself to both. Usually in movies it's the rock stars who are mythologized, but here it is Lester the critic who gets the Yoda treatment, dispensing sage, scurrilous *pensées* over the phone from his platter-clogged apartment. Crowe, who recently published a book of his affectionate, wide-eyed interviews with his directing hero Billy Wilder, has an affinity for tenderizing deep-dish cynics and outlaws: the Lester Bangs of this movie is a cautionary guru who understands the rot and corruption of rock but still loves it for its charge and its disposability; Russell Hammond assumes, uneasily, the role of rock satyr. A gifted guitarist, he seems slightly baffled by the writhings of his audience.

Russell may possess the onstage swagger of a star, but he looks to the uplifted gaze of William to validate his cool. And he really loves music. In the most serenely satisfying moment in the movie, Russell threatens to leave the band after repeated clashes with the thin-skinned lead singer (Jason Lee). He's brought back into the fold when the group, aboard their touring bus, joins in singing Elton John's "Tiny Dancer," tentatively at first and finally at full throttle. Suddenly all is right with the world. It's both a fantasy and a validation of how music can banish every bit of badness from your life.

Crowe knows how to bring out the youthful ardor in his actors. Patrick Fugit has the most difficult role, because William is essentially an observer, a peacemaker. (As a writer-director, Crowe is a peacemaker, too; he likes to bring people together.) William is the still center, or off-center, of every scene in which he appears, but his recessiveness is intensely inquiring and likeable. Kate Hudson, playing Russell's chief groupie, Penny Lane, is a swirl of concupiscence in *faux*-fur-collared coats and lace tank tops. Hudson brings out the preternatural womanliness and pathos in this girl, who can't be much older than William; she's wised-up already, and her baby fat is becoming hard-edged. Billy Crudup has been dubbed a star-in-waiting for so long that this film, which will surely make him one, seems almost like a coronation. His performance may resemble a loose-limbed frolic, but it's also feral and intuitive and carries within it the remembered essence of every celebrated and not-so-celebrated rocker from that pivotal era. Crudup understands Russell's complicated position in William's life, which is why the final reconciliation between the two is such a beautifully conceived finale. It's just a simple grace note of a scene, but, like the entire movie, it has the soft emotional resonance of a long-held chord.

Peter Rainer's 1998–2000 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

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Big Blue Marble

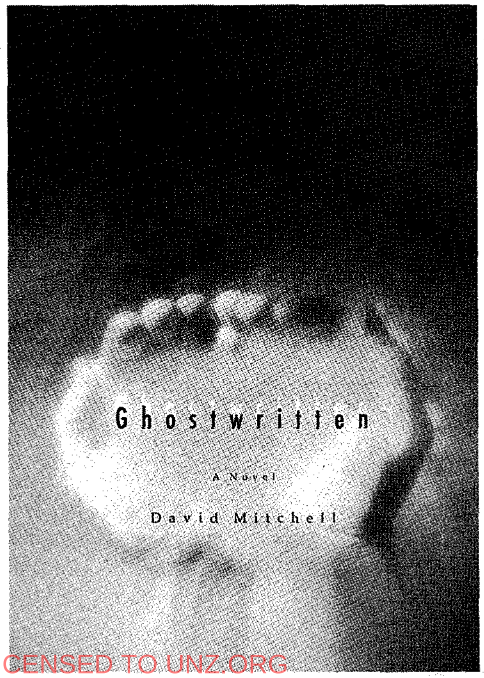
David Mitchell's ambitious and weighty first novel follows a daisy chain of characters through every time zone and across the gamut of individual experience.

Ghostwritten
BY DAVID MITCHELL
430 pages; Random House; $24.95

'WHAT'S IT ABOUT?" A MAN ON A train asks a girl with a book. The man is Danish, the train is speeding across Mongolia, the book is *War and Peace,* and the conversation takes place about a third of the way through David Mitchell's remarkably ambitious first novel, which seeks, like *War and Peace,* to be sprawling and intimate, global and personal, all at the same time. "Why things happen the way they do," the girl, who's Australian, blandly replies. "And why do things happen the way they do?" the Dane persists. (He thinks she's cute.) "I don't know, yet," she says. "It's *very* long."

You never do find out whether Sherry finishes her Tolstoy, but if you finish *Ghostwritten,* which is highly likely because it's an intricately assembled Fabergé egg of a novel, full of sly and sometimes beautiful surprises, you'll see the joke: It too is a *very* long book that's about why things happen the way they do. Like the girl, the book is probably better at framing questions than answering them: "Things happen because of people wanting," an (appropriately enough) Russian character says at one point, and it's as close to an answer as Mitchell offers. But the novel, like the girl, is attractive and absorbing enough so that you don't really care.

The complex narrative structure of Mitchell's book tells you a lot about its vast ambitions. What is it about? *Ghostwritten* consists of a series of ten subtly, often playfully interlinked chapters that circle the globe. It begins in Okinawa, where a young member of a loony doomsday cult has fled after releasing a deadly nerve gas into the Tokyo subway system, and spreads to Tokyo, where the teenage manager of a music store specializing in American jazz develops a crush on a girl who walks in; then to Hong Kong, where a young British lawyer launders money for a Russian mobster; then through Mongolia and St. Petersburg, where an aging beauty who works at the Hermitage helps steal art; and so forth through London, Ireland, and eventually New York. In a brief coda, we are back in Japan with the terrorist again—just at the moment he detonates the nerve bomb. (Moving east to west moves you backward through time, of course.)



I feel fine: It's the end of the world as we know it in this novel of human weakness.

The ingenious ways in which Mitchell connects the narratives provide a lot of this book's pleasures. True, some are more obviously mechanical than others: When the Japanese fugitive desperately calls a secret contact for help in the first chapter, he accidentally gets the jazz-record store in the second. But more often, the links are complex and suggestive. For instance: A womanizing Londoner who's ghostwriting the autobiography of an artist (who's an old friend of the Petersburg forger) saves an Irishwoman named Mo from being hit by a car. In the next section, you learn that Mo's a brilliant physicist who's invented a "zookeeper" technology that has consciousness of its own and can control all other technologies; she hit on it while riding in the same train compartment as the frisky Dane back in chapter five. (A "middle-aged Irish woman who either gazed out of the window or wrote numbers in a black notebook" is briefly noticed there.) And so on.

The structural cleverness and connectedness aren't merely decorative; they support a larger central theme, which is how chance and character connect us all, whether we like it or not. (A gentle irony of these stories is that people keep fleeing various kinds of entanglements only to find themselves in new ones: The fugitive terrorist, posing as a vacationing computer expert, is asked to lecture local schoolkids about computers.) Another name for elaborate interactions between accident, personality, and geography is history; a major preoccupation of Mitchell's novel is the way that history, or at least politics, affects us—particularly, the way ideologies, cults of one sort or another, crush individuals. "Why are men forever marching up the path to destroy my Tea Shack?" an old Chinese woman asks, not without provocation: As a girl she was raped by a warlord's son, and the Nationalists and then the Communists weren't much nicer. When you realize her granddaughter is the temptress who cons the crooked, arch-capitalist British lawyer, you want to applaud.

I have to say that as much as I admired Mitchell's big themes and Swiss-watch-movement structure, the flashbacks to great historical events meant to represent those themes here (Stalin-era show trials, "long-pig" barbecues during the Cultural Revolution) feel predigested—as if he were using them to give historical sweep and meaning to a narrative that is, in the end, as fragmented as the century it critiques. What makes *War and Peace* great, after all, is the way in which the personal passions allow you to feel and then understand the historical passions; you care about Pierre and Natasha et al., and that, in turn, gives you a grand insight into how personality and desire and timing interact in and through history. For all its ingenuities, *Ghostwritten* is oddly dispassionate; the brilliant narrative ploys can't compensate for what any novel on this scale (and with these ambitions) needs, which is characters you care about. I found myself fascinated but never swept up or moved by the novel.

Still, in an era in which much literary fiction is characterized by unearned ironies and glib cynicism, it's hard not to be impressed by the humanism that animates Mitchell's book. One of the ways he forces you to consider the phenomenon of interconnectedness is by repeating not only characters but objects (camphor trees, say) and even certain phrases throughout the novel. Among the latter is "High streets are becoming the same all over the world," something the terrorist and the art curator think, worlds apart. It's a bitter insight—the only way that people seem to be able to connect these days is through the banalities of global consumerism—but Mitchell, who's a 31-year-old Englishman, isn't content to stop and rest with a glib denouncement of "mass culture." Instead, he counters with deep old wisdom: If we, in "real" life, fail to see how much we have in common, fail to make the kinds of meaningful connections that his novel so ingeniously invites you to detect, we're doomed.

It's a bit of forgivable, youthful overkill that Mitchell makes the doom literal. In *Ghostwritten's* penultimate chapter, which ventures, intriguingly if a bit oddly, into the territory of sci-fi (well, not too oddly: There are ghosts here, too), we learn that the Zookeeper keeps trying to make the world a better place for mankind—stabilizing economies, developing alternative fuel sources, freezing nuclear arsenals—but decides, in the end, that *Homo sapiens* isn't worth the trouble. Readers of this big book will be glad that the author, unlike his creation, does find humanity worth the trouble; whatever its shortcomings, his book is worth a dozen of the morally anorexic first novels that regularly come down the pipe. *Ghostwritten* may conclude with the end of the world, but I, for one, am hoping for more. ■

Daniel Mendelsohn's reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

cue

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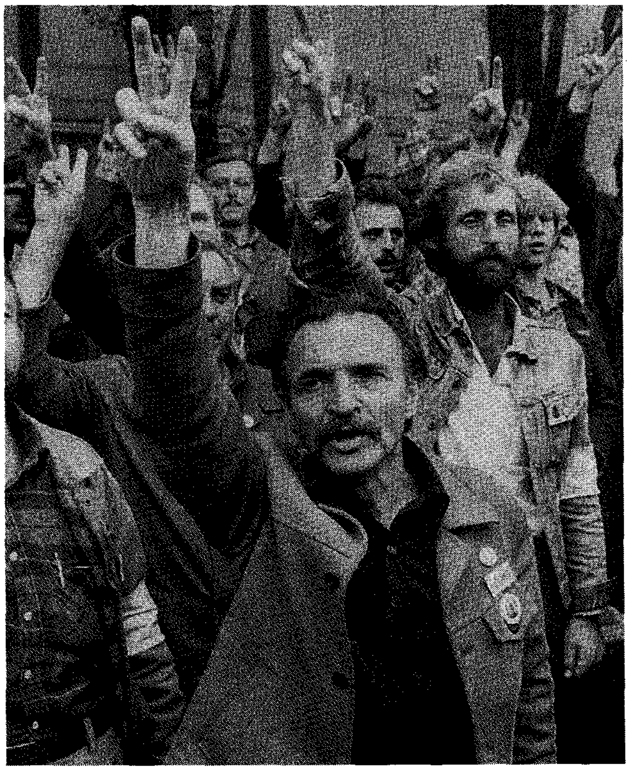
Video Nonviolence

The mini-series 'A Force More Powerful' may lack big battles and body counts, but it isn't hurting for heroes.

IT HAS SOMEHOW BEEN WRITTEN—IN BULLET HOLES and amputations, in shell shock and mushroom clouds—that political science is a clenched fist, that power flows from the mouth of a gun, that blood lust is coded in our genome, that death is the inevitable trajectory of all narrative. Thus, in entertainment as in statecraft, the basic plotline is a showdown followed by a body count. Who would think passive resistance had a chance against massive retaliation?

Steve York does, in **A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict** (Mondays, September 18 and 25; 9 to 10:30 P.M.; Channel 13). Covering the past 100 years, as atrocious as any in human history, this remarkable documentary mini-series still manages to find reasons for radical optimism. In India in 1930 for Gandhi's march to the sea to collect salt, in Denmark during the Nazi occupation, in the American South for the first sit-ins at segregated lunch counters, in Poland for the shipyard strike at Gdansk and the birth of Solidarity, in South Africa for the start of an economic boycott that spread to every Western nation, and in Chile for the "NO" campaign against Pinochet, it bears witness to the tactics and triumph of nonviolent resistance that was anything but passive.

On the contrary, this resistance was active, mobile, disciplined, and smart—as shrewd in its scattershot dispersal of actions and resources as it was sophisticated in its sequencings of protests, slowdowns, strikes, and sabotage; as media-savvy in its selection of symbolic issues as it was innovative in rallying support, evading censorship, and capitalizing on overreactions. If the intention was to dramatize the depraved nature of authority by withholding consent—by refusing to abide by the rules; by challenging a regime's legitimacy; by disrupting public life and destabilizing the economy—there was also a crucial dividend. In mobilizing a popular movement against tyranny and exploitation, occupation and oppression, servitude and second-class citizenship, the resistance also created and sustained a community with a right to feel proud of itself: the wherewithal of civil society.



Solidarity now! Workers strike for free trade unions in Gdansk, Poland, in 1980.

Besides embarrassing the British, Gandhi decolonized the Indian mind. Besides refusing to build German ships, feed the German army, or honor Nazi racial laws, the Danish resistance saved not only the lives of many Jewish citizens but also the nation's dignity. Besides desegregating Nashville's downtown shopping center and changing the minds of its mayor and newspaper editor, students at Fisk University and local black churches inspired a civil-rights movement that swept across America. Solidarity, which simply insisted on the right to strike and never fired a single shot, planted the seeds for that velvet revolutionizing of police states all over Eastern Europe. Mandela may have prolonged his long ordeal in prison by declining to renounce violence, but his release only became possible—much less his presidency even imaginable—after an economic boycott strangled the apartheid state. Chile was delivered from Pinochet's dictatorship not by left-wing guerrillas but by unions and the mothers of the disappeared, by nonshopping days and monthly candlelit protests, by street festivals and songfests and slick television commercials before the 1988 plebiscite.

Against all the retaliatory power of British imperialism, of the Third Reich and American apartheid and the Soviet monolith and tin-pot fascisms in South Africa and Latin America, a principled and nuanced nonviolence would ultimately prevail. So much for theories of totalitarianism. While our host for *A Force More Powerful,* the perhaps inevitable Ben Kingsley, is so understated as to suggest sedation, what we see on the screen is thrilling—Fisk students taunting each other with racist epithets to prepare for dime-store confrontations; Polish workers occupying factories and negotiating a breath of air; Jewish children whisked out of their classrooms by Danish teachers before the death-camp roundup; Bishop Tutu telling off youthful rioters in Cape Town; those mothers in black in Santiago; and all of India refining salt while Gandhi plays with his spinning wheel.

Nor have these three hours exhausted the rich subject. In a companion volume *(continued on page 72)*

Photograph by Erazm Ciolek.

ADAM PLATT

Spanish Main

Meigas's traditional but complex dishes will transport you to Spain. The tyrannical waiters—Galicia is famous for its dictators, too—are just as authentic.

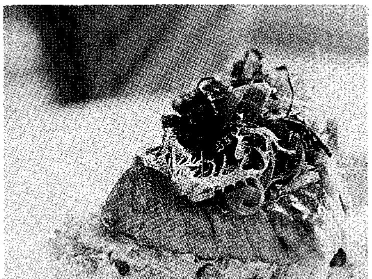
MY UNCLE FRANK, THE FAMILY GASTRONOME, considers the world to be divided into two distinct, though uneven, groups: There are those who love to eat tripe, and then there is everybody else. M. F. K. Fisher, a respectful member of the latter group, described tripe as slippery, ivory-white rubber. The writer Waverley Root thought the honeycombed stomachs of calves and sheep had a boiling-laundry odor if not cooked long enough. But my Uncle Frank has weirdly vivid memories of tripe, which he regaled me with as we waited for our lunch at **Meigas**, the city's newest temple to high Spanish cuisine. "Good tripe took days of simmering," he said, "and was the test of a fine kitchen." He'd had his first taste of the great dish in 1947, cooked by a Republican exile from the Spanish Civil War. He'd dined on tripe around the world, but still preferred the Spanish recipe, which called for a smothering of sweet paprika, and was served for Sunday lunch, as a hangover cure, like Texan chili.

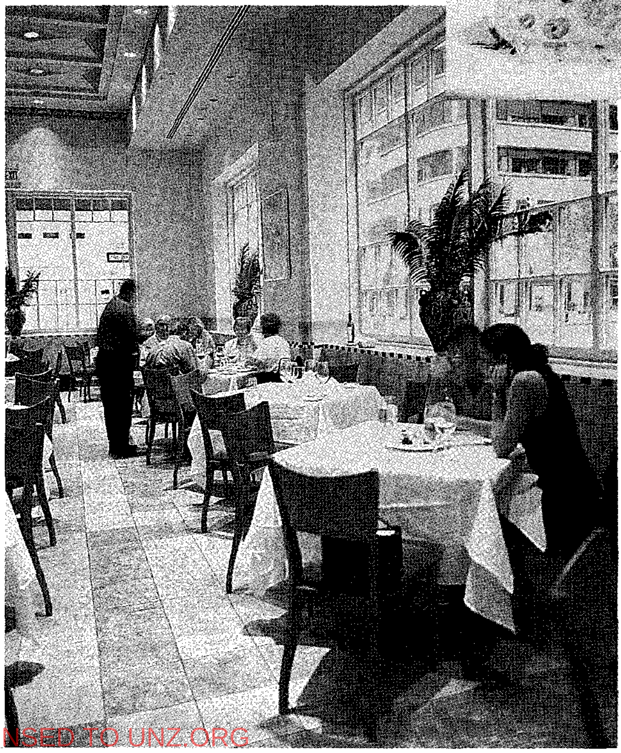
Tripe is a lunchtime dish at Meigas, too, a tapas-style *primero plato* on a menu crowded with fanciful, traditionalist items like piquillo peppers stuffed with marinated tuna and braised oxtail croquettes rolled in a dusting of crushed pistachios. But my Uncle Frank more or less ignored these delicacies until his tripe arrived. He talked of Galicia (*meigas* means "sorceress" in Galician), the family seat of Francisco Franco and Fidel Castro. "Galicia produces great dictators," he said. "The waiters can be dictatorial, too." Our tripe was served by a grave-looking gentleman wearing a priestly goatee. He watched in silence as the aficionado sniffed the paprika bouquet and stirred the velvety stew with his spoon. Cubes of ham were mingled with the veal belly, which tasted sweet and gamy and evaporated in the mouth, like some strange smokehouse confection. Uncle Frank took one taste, then another. "Mercy," he said, rolling his eyes to the heavens. "Mercy me."

Serious eaters have rhapsodized over Meigas (pronounced *MAY-eee-gus*) ever since the restaurant opened its doors a year ago, on a windy corner of Hudson Street in west SoHo. The dining space looks boxy, like an airport lounge, and on weekday nights it feels a little bereft. The ceilings are too high to absorb echoes and the walls are painted in dry, sandy colors, like a bathhouse in Marbella. For art, there is a goofy mural of a Galician sea scene, complete with fishing boats and a trademark sorceress emerging from the clouds. "Zero hipness factor," whispered my trend-conscious wife as she peered around the bar, searching for hordes of funky tapas folk. The oak bar is too austere to create a cozy downtown tapas sensation. But if you want lofty Spanish cuisine (wanting hipness, my wife finished her drink and left), served stylishly and without flourish, then relax, follow your somber waiter to a corner table, and let the wonders of chef Luis Bollo's menu unfold.

Galicians specialize in trencherman food: suckling pig, grilled skate, pulpy octopus speckled with sea salt and paprika. Bollo is a Basque, and an acolyte of Ferran Adria, the mad-genius three-star chef at the restaurant El Bulli, on the Costa Brava. Adria is an alchemist with jellies and foams; he whips up evanescent garlic ice creams and creamy puffs of smoked cod, and even presents his diners shot glasses filled with wisps of fragrant smoke. Bollo brings this lightness to the table without tipping too far over the edge. My oxtail croquettes had a stewed, hearty taste but were crunchy and bite-size, like bonbons. The suckling pig, which took nearly half an hour to prepare, had the honied lightness of good Peking duck. Its skin smelled sweetly of rosemary and was the color of candied oranges. "This is not my fiesta pig," exclaimed a delicate eater at my table who grew up feasting on the dish in Puerto Rico. "This is the filet mignon of pigs!"

Coaxed back on another evening, my wife gave a prim thumbs-up to chef Bollo's seafood experiments. The room was half filled with elderly contessas and solitary, beef-eating gourmands, with napkins stuck in their collars. "It's a blue-hair crowd," she said, as I sampled a beautifully textured square of shredded veal ravioli (decorated with a candied fan of Serrano ham), then some fine veal cheeks, speckled with crisps of bacon, on a spongy bed of leeks and wilted spinach. The traditionalist in me sprung for a





Spanish steps: Dine take the long view a Meigas; above, salmon in white almond gazpacho.

Photographs by Kenneth Chen.

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Leonard *continued from page 70*

with the same name, by Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall (St. Martin's Press), we spend time in Burma, El Salvador, Mongolia, Argentina, and the Philippines. We meet Leo Tolstoy and Corazón Aquino and Aung San Suu Kyi. We hear about the women of India, who boiled the water for the salt, who shamed buyers of confiscated goods, who were beaten by police, and who went to jail in the tens of thousands. We revisit those Dutch doctors who refused, during the Nazi occupation, to screen for race and genetic defects. We recall the nonviolent aspects of the Palestinian *intifada,* a "white revolution" of theater, poetry, and flags, of cigarette boycotts, tax refusals, and job actions. We remember yellow flowers, nappies worn as symbolic scarves, open palms and hidden cows and whistles instead of guns.

An entire history has gone not only unhonored but almost unremarked upon, because it's not all that spectacular. It lacks a lip-smacking body count. It proposes courage and endurance, love and ingenuity, comradeship and suppleness. If Danish schoolboys could unbalance the Nazi killing machine, if the women of Manila could embarrass the tanks of Ferdinand Marcos with a bouquet of yellow flowers, what might any of us be capable of? I am reminded of a visit to Prague in the summer of 1990, where we tried to imagine in Wencelas Square that multitude whose jangling of keys had sounded to the peripatetic historian Timothy Garton Ash like "massed Chinese bells." Where we ventured from Kafka's Castle and the Jewish cemetery and the Old Town cuckoo clock to the very birthplace of the Velvet Revolution.

It was at the Magic Lantern Theater, on a stage set for Durrenmatt's *Minotaurus,* under a television set with the sound turned off, that Vaclav Havel and his friends—writers, professors, actors, and jailbird intellectuals—met to compose a brand-new social contract. Ash tells us that once when they were tired and depressed, students appeared onstage dressed comically as Young Pioneers (red kerchiefs, white blouses, and pigtails): "It is the Committee for a More Joyful Present. We have come, they say, to cheer you up—and make sure you don't turn into another politburo. Then they hand out little circular mirrors to each member of the plenum." So that the members of that plenum would have to look at themselves as they wrote the future.

It seems to me that we could do a whole lot worse than look at *A Force More Powerful* and imagine ourselves in its mirrors. There are heroes here. ■

John Leonard's 1997–2000 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

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chaste bowl of baby squid, covered in sherry sauce and its own dark ink, although my wife averted her eyes when this unsightly (but delicious) dish appeared, to concentrate on Bollo's extraordinary lobster gazpacho. The soup was laced with Cordoban olive oil and beaten into a frothy melon-colored foam. A rosette of chopped vegetables sat in the middle of the bowl, buried under a pedestal of fresh lobster, which collapsed back into the broth when you tweaked it with your spoon.

The wait staff at Meigas hovers sternly over similar Bulli-inspired delicacies, like salmon bathed in white almond gazpacho, and a roasted loin of rabbit, decorated with puffs of porcini-mushroom foam. Our goateed waiter turned out to be Portuguese, which didn't keep him from taking us goose-stepping through the best list of Spanish wines in the city. The dainty pork expert enjoyed the sampling of Conde de Siruela he assigned to accompany her suckling pig. I dutifully swigged successive glasses of the Albariño with my codfish confit one night, and again with a thrombotic dish of grilled skate and veal sweetbreads the next. Uncle Frank fed himself a diet of spicy white Ribeiro before his tripe arrived, then said quiet hosannas as he studied the list of grand red reserves. He thought it compared favorably with one he'd seen at the Jockey in Madrid, although when Mr. Goatee was out of earshot, he whispered, "The reds are overpriced—have the Galician whites."

Mr. Goatee offered many sophisticated sherries and portos, although even our most industrious boozers paused to linger over their desserts. Just five are listed on the menu (not counting mixed fruit, and an array of elaborate Iberian cheeses). Pastry chef Helena Bravo's modern bread pudding has been widely hailed, although a haughty Englishwoman at our table pronounced the tart sheep's-milk ice cream a bit too much. She preferred the foamy almond croquettes, served over a white napkin on matching silver spoons. I preferred a weightless construction of coffee and brandy crème, built on slim layers of chocolate, accompanied by an odd egg cup of vinyl-green parsley foam. You couldn't catch all the tastes; they fluttered around like butterflies, then vanished on the tongue. Pass this confection around the table, and watch your audience look amazed, then mildly duped, like witnesses to a collective magic trick.

Meigas, 350 Hudson Street (212-627-5800). Lunch, Monday through Friday 12–3 P.M.; dinner, Monday through Saturday 5:30–10:30 P.M. Appetizers, $6 to $16.50; entrées, $16 to $28. All major credit cards. ■

Adam Platt's reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

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Mirror, Mirror on the wall...were those tiny frown lines there yesterday? And were those capris this snug the last time you wore them? Life isn't fair. Just because you couldn't resist getting a little sun this summer, or overindulged at your Labor Day picnic...does that make you a bad person?

Ease your conscience. Whether it's your complexion that needs reviving or your thighs that need revising, New York spas have solutions galore. To visit or get more info, consult our directory on page 12a.

get a new pair of legs

ENDERMOLOGIE® isn't just a cellulite-busting treatment to **Skin & Body Contour** owner Denise Margulies, it's a calling. Her enthusiasm is matched only by the skill with which she has smoothed many a pair of legs (including some that grace the fashion magazines). And now, for better and faster results, Denise uses the new CELLUM6® machine. "This machine is much stronger, it brings up the circulation 200 percent faster, it exfoliates better, and it reduces dimpling much, much faster. Clients see a difference after just a few sessions. One of my clients had dimpling even after two liposuctions—and now she's wearing a bikini at age 50." To help you look your best, Denise's staff of licensed astheticians also offers facials, acupuncture, and power peels.

take it off—permanently

"There is mass confusion with respect to hair removal," says Lucy Peters, president and founder of **Lucy Peters® International, Ltd.** "If you really want to get rid of hair, you must use electrolysis. And if you use electrolysis, you shouldn't have the same hair treated over and over again."

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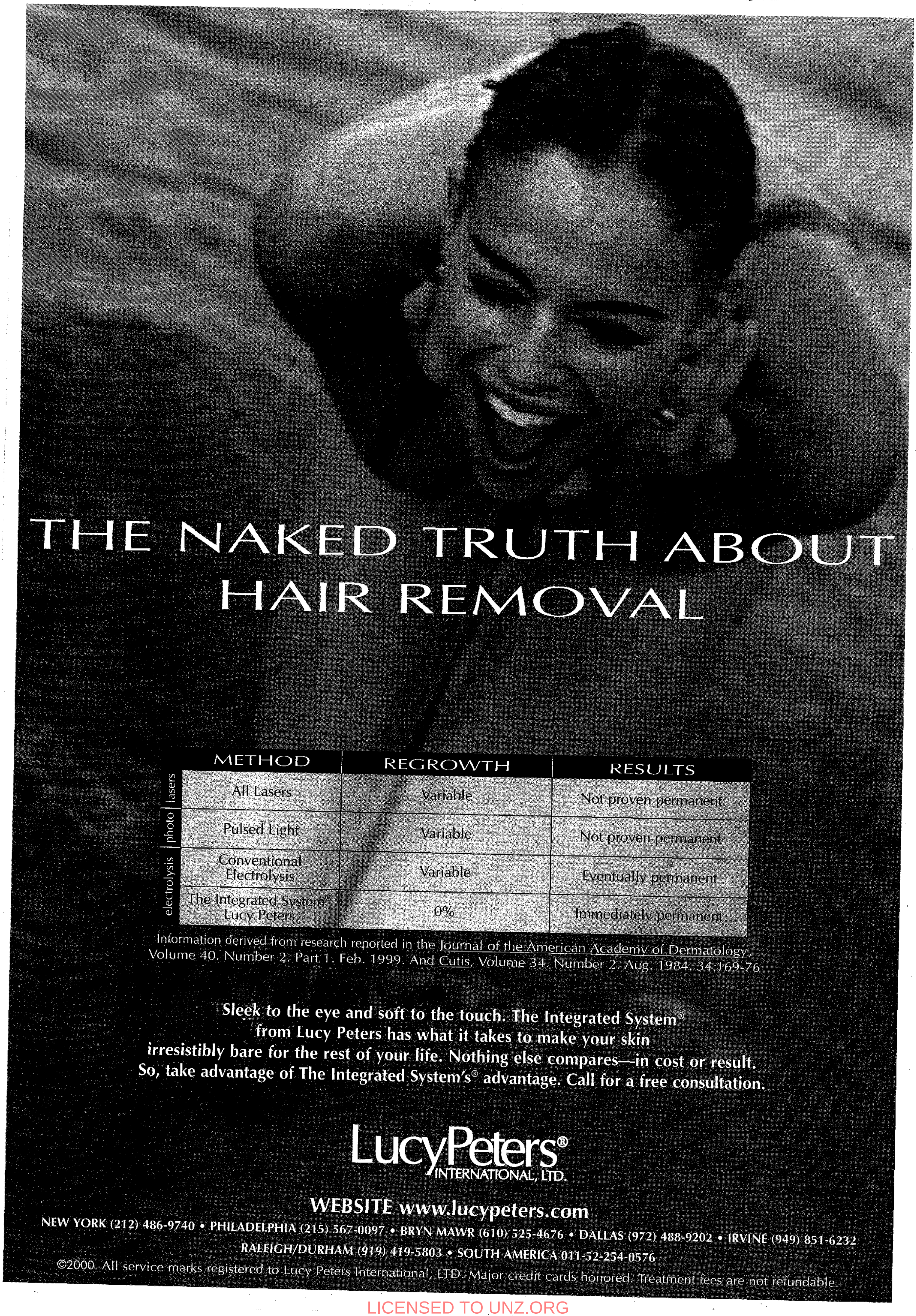
defy gravity

Anushka Day Spa & Cellulite Clinic offers the best body contouring in town, raves *Allure* Magazine. And indeed the walls of this lovely East Side townhouse are lined with photos of celebrities and socialites who have been tightened and slimmed here. With 28 years of results, Anushka now offers the breakthrough Defying Gravity™ treatment. After an application of cellulite-busting Modeling Gel, the ULTRA-TONE machine uses sound waves to heighten penetration. The Defying Gravity Body Firm cream is then used with the Presso-Jet, a rhythmic compression that focuses on legs, thighs, derriere, stomach, and upper arms. Says Anushka: "It provides lymphatic drainage and the effect of reflexology massage; it leaves you feeling de-bloated and slimmer, with a smoother, tighter body. This treatment is so popular, the results so incredible, we've had to fly in two more machines from Europe."

"At Lucy Peters, results are immediate and permanent."



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chic by chocolate

For a retreat that's as delicious as it is unique, escape to **The Hotel Hershey**'s luxurious new $7 million spa (opening late November). In addition to conventional therapies, The three-floor 17,000 square-foot Spa will feature—you guessed it—all sorts of divine chocolate-based treatments. The Whipped Cocoa bath is literally a chocolate milk whirlpool. Can anything that smells so good be good for you? Yes, says Spa Director Jennifer Wayland-Smith. "Chocolate contains caffeine, which stimulates circulation and helps fight cellulite. The milk enzymes renew and soften the skin. It's soothing, it's indulgent, and best of all, it has no calories." Another treatment treat is the Chocolate Fondue Wrap, which is Moor Mud made yummy with essence of cocoa. "It's loaded with trace minerals and elements," says Jennifer. "It's great for stiff joints and muscles."

let there be light

Troubled by sun-damaged skin, broken capillaries, mild acne scars, aging skin, enlarged pores, or blackheads? Rosacea or fine lines, especially around the eyes and mouth? Welcome to the Epi-Facial, the new high-tech, non-invasive and risk-free alternative offered at ***completely bare*** (Manhattan and Scarsdale). This revolutionary process uses intense, controlled pulsed light to target different skin levels, to focus on specific skin layers, while at the same time resurfacing the entire face. Says owner Cindy Barshop: "You can look years younger, but without the down time of surgery or laser resurfacing. No procedure can accomplish so much with such low risk." And don't forget: *completely bare* also offers the Epi-Light™ system of hair removal.

service, quality, comfort

"Personal service, quality treatments, and client comfort—these are our main concerns," says Isabella of **Isabella's Day Spa**. "We make every effort to accommodate our clients' needs. We're proudest of our electrolysis—and our results are simply great. Electrolysis done by the right person is still the No. 1 method of permanent hair removal." Isabella uses the finest products and offers many popular facials, including collagen, Vitamin C, and glycolic. "We have a great new Murad enzyme facial for problem or oily skin. The products we use open the pores and make extractions easier and more comfortable. Our Hydradermie Facial by Guinot cleanses, revitalizes and nourishes the skin." Isabella offers several massage therapies, including reflexology, Swedish, and aromatherapy. "We also have couples massage, by appointment."

skin alive

With her medical training and almost 30 years of experience, Faina Shafir of **Faina's European Skin Care Center** is a true skin care expert. All her facials begin with the basic European Deep Pore Cleansing Facial, which includes massage, steam, and extraction. This is followed by two masks, either an exfoliating and nourishing or a tightening and nourishing, according to skin type. "After the summer, all skin types need hydrating and rejuvenating," says Faina, "so we use seaweed, Vitamin C,

"Good skin care doesn't end in the salon."

and oxygen treatments to restore youthful radiance." Since good skin care doesn't end in the salon, Faina prescribes customized home regiments. In addition to 16 facials, she offers manicures and pedicures, reflexology, aromatherapy body and scalp massage, and detoxifying body treatments that smooth, tone, and firm the skin.

west side wizardry

With Labor Day behind us, it's time to put aside summer's casual ways and get serious about polishing up your body and your look. Let the **Scott J. AVEDA Lifestyle Salon & Spas** administer head-to-toe remedies for the ravages of sun and surf. To alleviate hair and scalp problems, try the Prescriptions treatment, which deep conditions the scalp and moisturizes the hair; it includes a stress-relieving pressure-point massage of scalp and neck.

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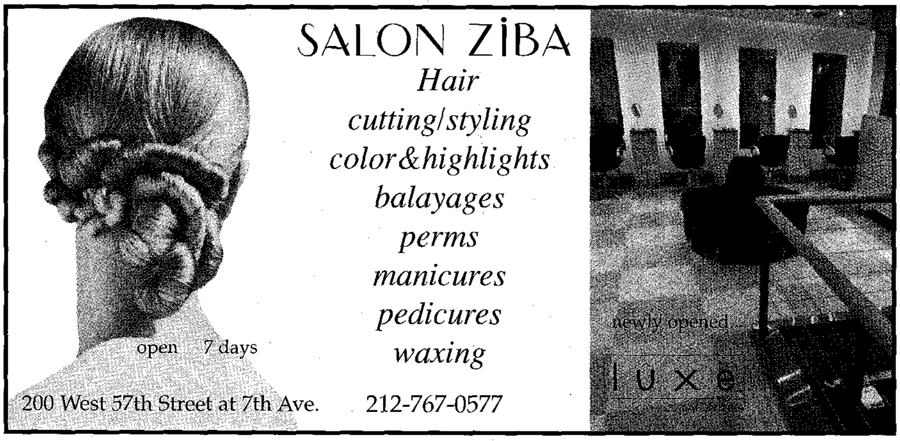

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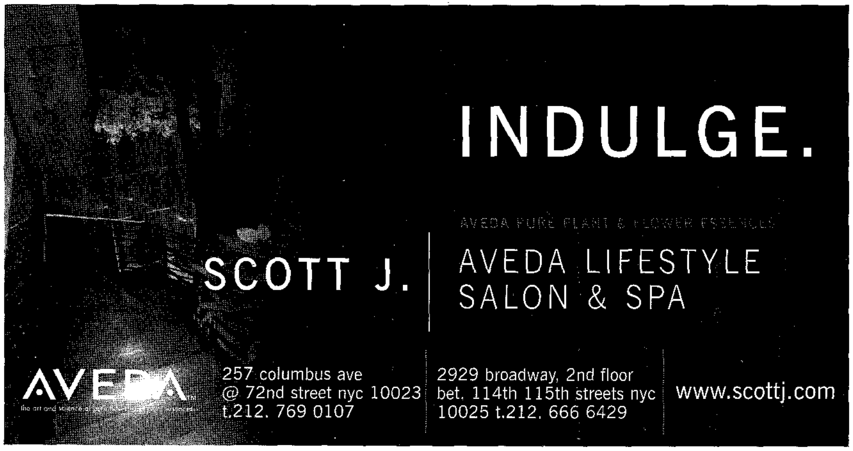

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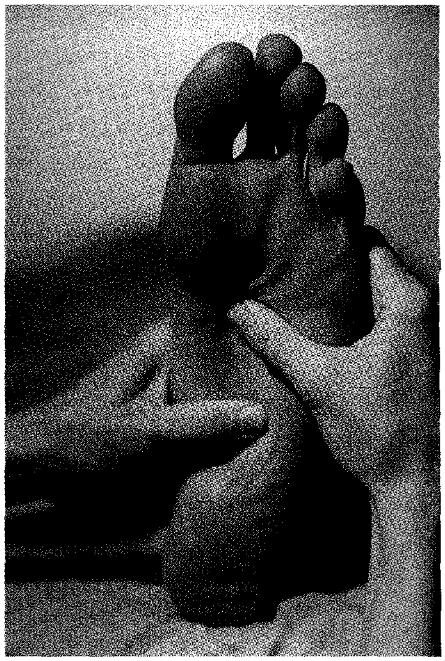

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oxygenate me

Refresh and revitalize summer-abused complexions with the hot new Oxygen Booster at **Lia Schorr Skin Care**. After the skin is prepared with a light massage and cleansing mask, vitamins and liposomes are applied with cold and warm masks. A refreshing oxygen mist is used to boost penetration—and voilá, the dewy glow of youth is back. "It's a miracle worker," says Lia, who has cared for more show business complexions than she can count. "it's hydrating, it's anti-aging, it controls acne—and it works for all skin types. My clients love it." The treatment, which takes about 30 minutes, can be taken alone—or preceded with one of Lia's seven superb facials. The spa also offers full body services, as well as manicures, pedicures, waxing, and electrolysis.

"Fall is a great time to throw away your razor and still be smooth."

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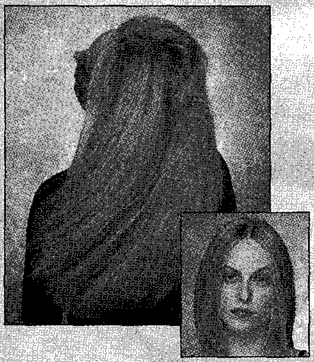

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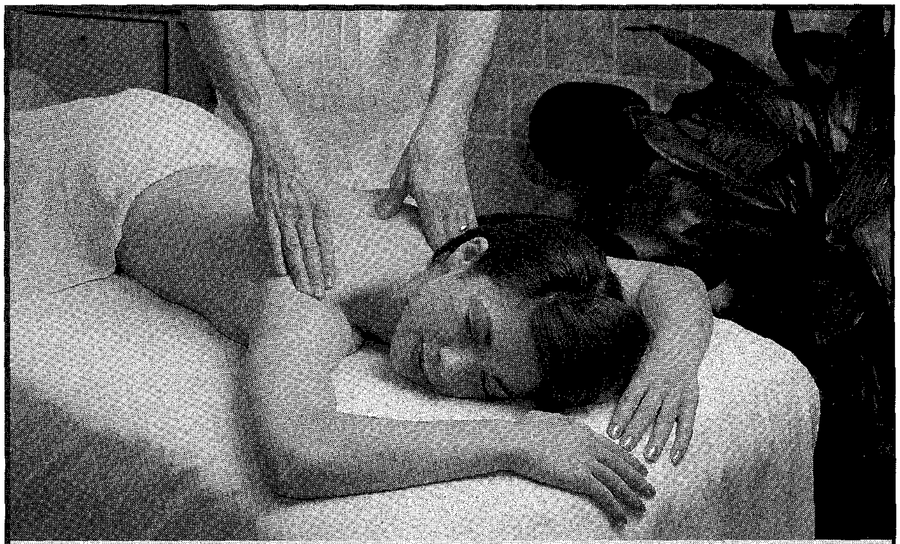
"Fall is a great time to throw away your razor and still be smooth," says Leah Louis of **Smooth Solutions**. "Our GentleLase laser is one of only a few machines approved by the FDA for permanent hair reduction. With its exclusive cooling spray, it's the most state-of-the-art technology available—but it should only be used on skin that hasn't been recently exposed to sun. So—with about three to five treatments 10 weeks apart, you won't have to worry about hair removal next summer—or ever! It's perfect for doing large areas in the fastest time possible." Try the new CELLUM6® ENDERMOLOGIE® machine for cellulite reduction and body contouring—or the new Micro-Dermabrasion with nontoxic salt crystals instead for stretch marks and fine lines. Smooth Solutions' innovative aesthetic treatments are complemented by its alliance with renowned cosmetic surgery



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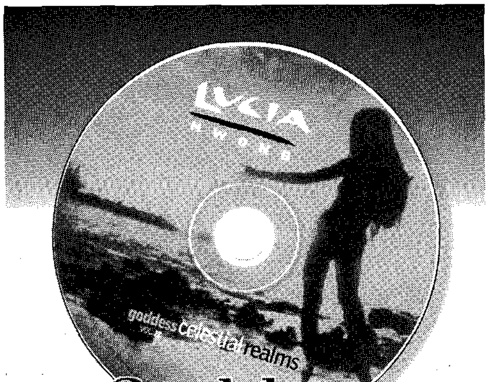

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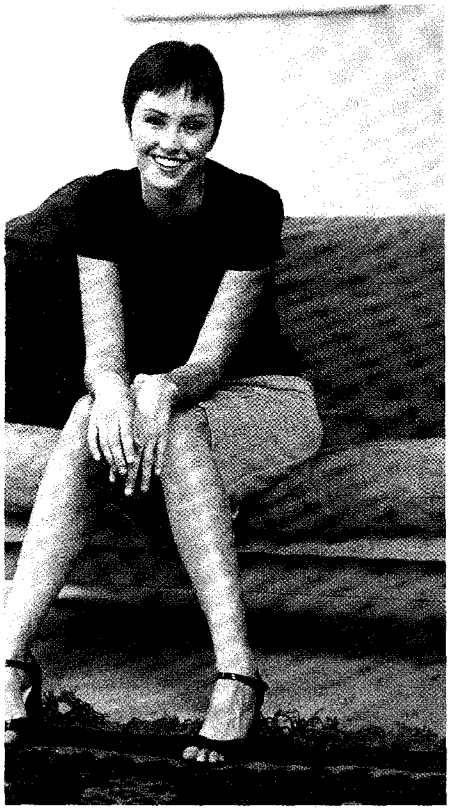

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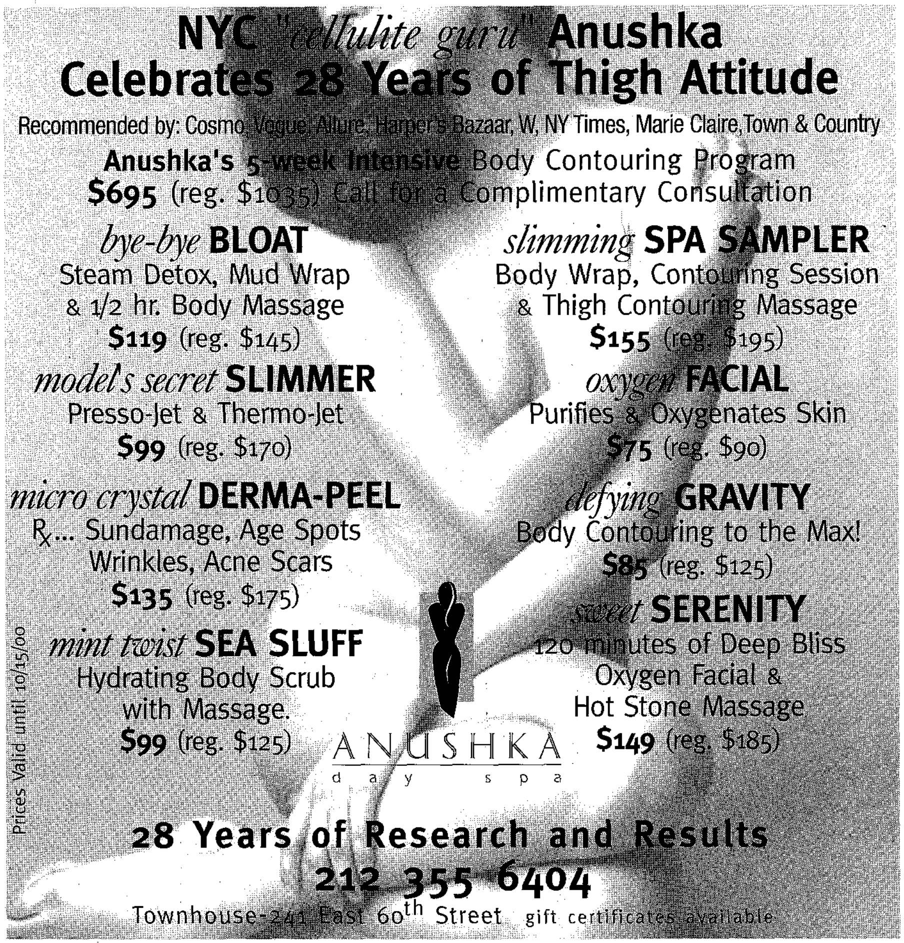

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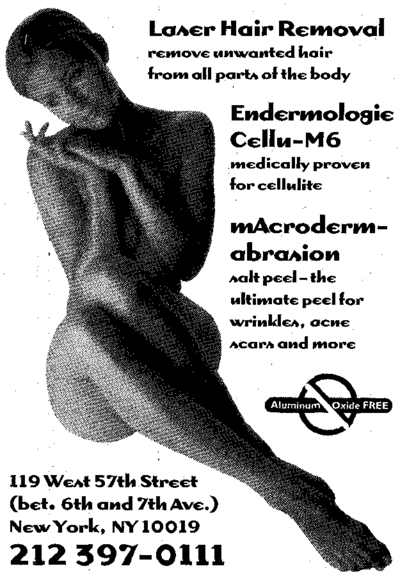

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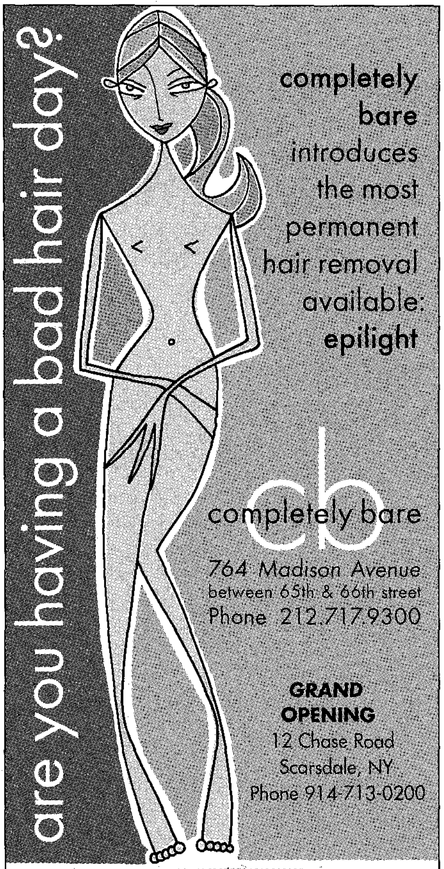
> "Eighties and beyond hair is popular, with curls and longer lengths."

are you having a bad hair day?



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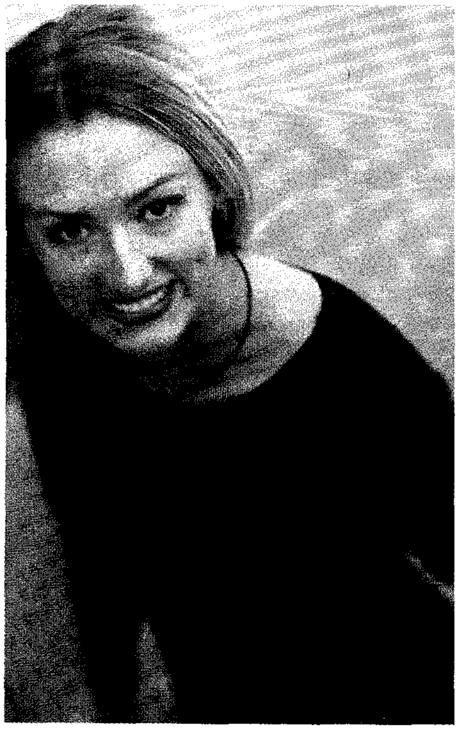

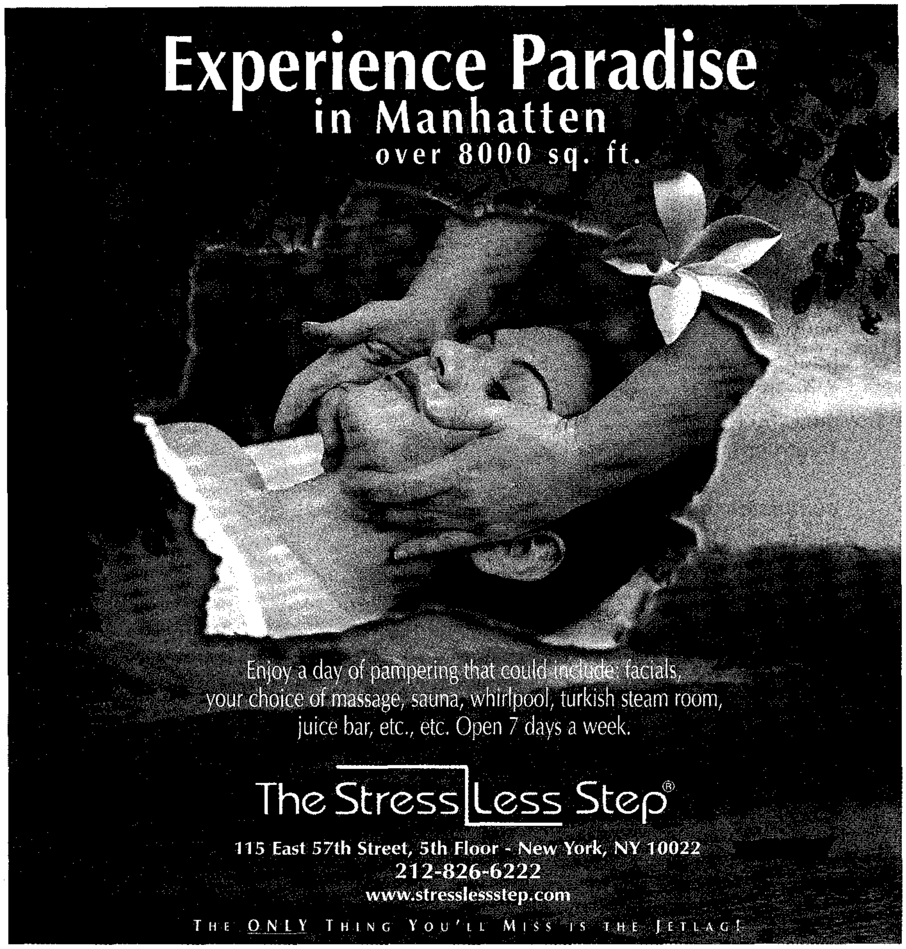

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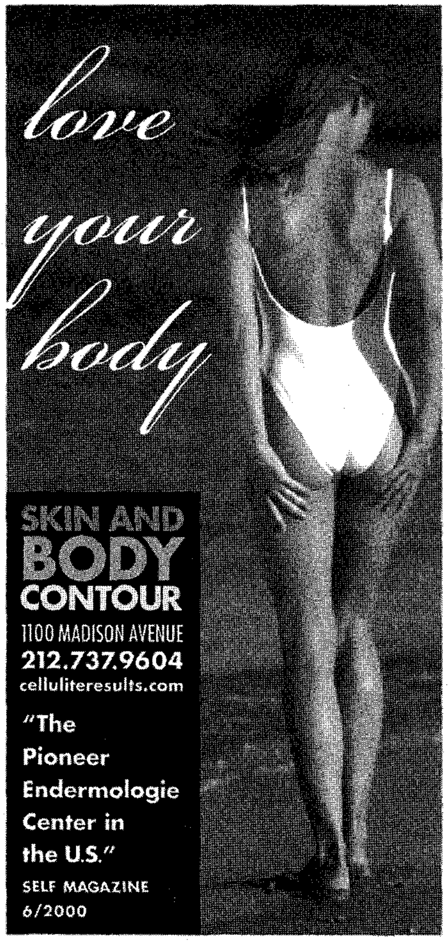

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Faina's European Skin Care Center, 157 W. 57th St., Suite 304, 245-6557; 1-800-331-6730. The Spa Escape (four hours): European Deep Pore Cleansing, Hydrating Mask, Full Body Massage (one hour), European Manicure and Pedicure, gift, and spa lunch, now $180 ($225 value).

Goddess Music is available at metaphysical book stores, at Loving Touch Center, 172 Madison Ave., 725-4930 and The Center of Living Light, 631-728-4173. Both offer a free Reiki healing circle. Also at Borders, Tower, Virgin, Sam Goody, Barnes & Noble—and on Amazon.com. Visit Lucia's personal site at www.goddessmusic.com.

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The Angelo David International Hair Salon, 48 E. 43rd St., 883-6620; 2701 Summer St., Stamford, CT, 203-325-0144; 2132 Central Park Ave., Yonkers, NY, 914-793-0300. If you have thinning hair, damaged hair, or not enough hair for the styles you want to wear, come in for a free consultation.

The Spa at The Hotel Hershey, Hotel Road, Hershey, PA, 1-800-HERSHEY. Day spa packages from $210-$320. Weekend packages, including room, breakfast, and spa services: one night, $369 per person; two nights, $329 per person, per night; three nights, $299 per person, per night. Midweek rates also available.

The StressLess Step, 115 E. 57th St., 5th floor, 826-6222; www.stresslessstep.com. The price for any one-hour treatment is $90, and no tipping. The StressLess Step is open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m.

cue

A Weekly Guide to Entertainment and the Arts in New York

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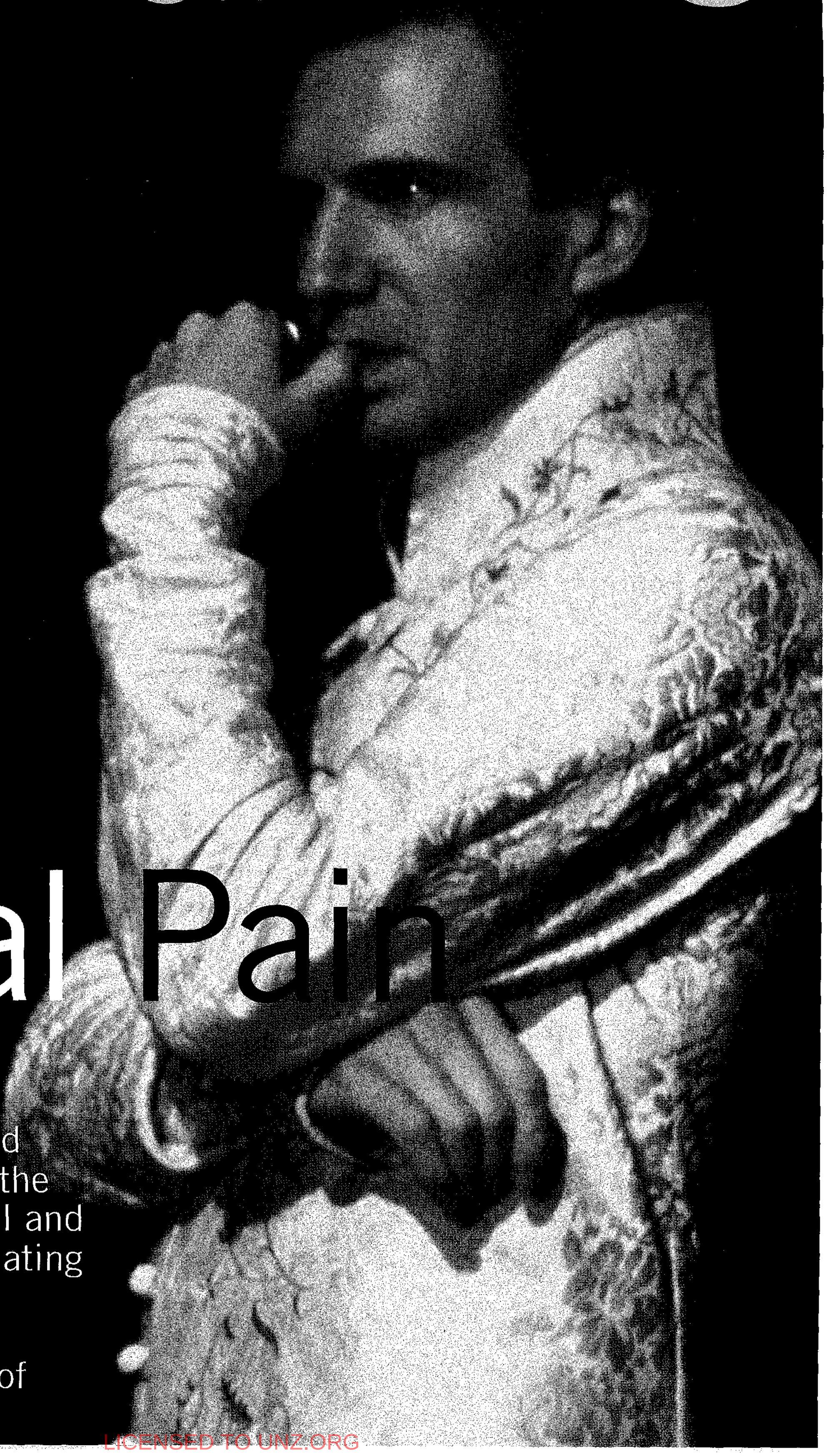


Royal Pain

Ralph Fiennes's head hangs heavy under the crowns of Richard II and Coriolanus in alternating Almeida Theatre productions at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (page 93)

movies

Paragraph 175...Oliver Stone...Budd Boetticher

New Films

An Affair of Love—Frédéric Fonteyne's film—originally titled *Une Liaison Pornographique*—involves two strangers (Nathalie Baye and Sergi Lopez) who meet through a personal ad in order to explore their mutual fetish. Instead of watching their kinky pecadilloes, we're privy to several long monologues about how lonely love can be for urban dwellers. (1 hr. 20 mins.; R) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Aimée & Jaguar—The true story of Lilly Wust and Felice Schragenheim (Juliane Kohler and Marie Schrader, respectively), who were lovers in the middle of Nazi Germany despite the fact that one was a member of the Jewish underground and the other an exemplar of Nazi motherhood. Based on Erica Fischer's best-selling book of the same name. (2 hrs. 5 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

★**Almost Famous**—See Rainer, page 66. (2 hrs.; R) *Opens 9/13.*

The Art of War—Wesley Snipes plays a superspy who must save the world from a conspiracy that just might conquer the United Nations. (1 hr. 57 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews Orpheum 7; UA Gemini; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Canarsie; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Autumn in New York—Winona Ryder plays a dying young woman who is romanced by silver fox Richard Gere in this drippy, luxe love story directed by Joan Chen. It's pretty terrible all around. (Rainer; 8/28/00) (1 hr. 55 mins.; PG-13) *UA Union Square; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Clearview's Beekman; Sony Lincoln Square; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; UA Movieworld; Atrium.*

Backstage—A slick, perhaps too slick, look at Jay-Z's 1999 "Hard Knock Life" tour. Co-stars DMX, Redman, and Method Man. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *CC Village East; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Loews 19th St. East; CC Sutton; Loews 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; UA Crossbay.*

The Ballad of Ramblin' Jack—Music legend Ramblin' Jack Elliott, the epitome of the folkie singing cowboy and compadre of Woody Guthrie, was born Elliott Adnopoz, the son of a Brooklyn Jewish doctor. This documentary, which was lovingly directed by his daughter Aiyana Elliott, traces his screwy ramble of a life. (Rainer; 8/28/00) (1 hr. 45 mins.; NR) *Clearview's Waverly.*

Benjamin Smoke—Jem Cohen and Peter Sillen's compelling documentary about Benjamin (no last name), a speed-addled, HIV-positive drag queen who fronts a punk-country-blues band called Smoke. (1 hr. 20 mins.; NR) *The Screening Room.*

Bittersweet Motel—A documentary following the foggy, blissed-out antics of the *Über*-hippie musical outfit Phish. (1 hr. 20 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village.*

Bless the Child—Maggie O'Connor (Kim Basinger) just doesn't have time on her hands to consider the supernatural—that is, until she takes under her wing an autistic newborn (Holliston Coleman) whose soul is caught up in a metaphysical battle between the forces of good and of evil. Jimmy Smits plays the FBI agent with an encyclopedic knowledge of all things occult. (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; Atrium.*

Blood Simple—The Coen brothers' audacious debut, about a green-eyed Texas bar owner who puts a contract out on his wife and her lover, returns in a trimmed-down director's cut. Starring John Getz, Frances McDormand, and Dan Hedaya. (1 hr. 35 mins.; R) *Loews State.*

Bring It On—A band of pom-pom-shaking cheerleaders don't quite know how to react to their new team member: a street-smart punk (Eliza Dusku) imported from Los Angeles. (1 hr. 31 mins; PG-13) *UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea West; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Clearview's Olympia; New Coliseum; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.*

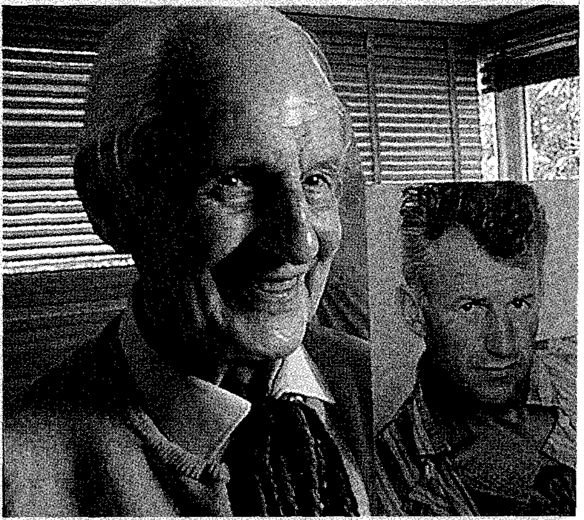
Butterfly—This film—a huge hit at the Sundance Film Festival as well as the recipient of thirteen Goya (Spanish Oscar) nominations—stars Spanish megastar Fernando Fernán-Gómez as a kindly schoolmaster who helps a timid new student adapt both to his campus and to the world around him. (1 hr. 36 mins.; R) *CC Sutton; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Cinemart.*

Cecil B. Demented—John Waters's new movie stars Melanie Griffith as a movie queen with a diva-size ego who is kidnapped by a guerilla film director, Stephen Dorff's Cecil B. Demented, and terrorized into starring in his movie. His crew, the Sprocket Holes, are a gaggle of weirdos; their Yippie-style chants call for the destruction of bad cin-

Documentary

The Sorrow and the Pity

P*aragraph 175*, the latest documentary from filmmaking team Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman (best known for *The Celluloid Closet* and *Common Threads: Stories From the Quilt*), is not easy to watch. Of the tens of thousands of homosexuals to have been arrested and sent to concentration camps during World War II (under Paragraph 175, a German law that ruled homosexual activity punishable by imprisonment or the loss of civil rights), only eight are known to still be alive—and six of these prisoners' testimonials are recorded here on film for the first time. "We did everything we could to leaven the heaviness of the subject," says Epstein. "All the goings-on during prewar Berlin? *That* seemed like a pretty fun time." True enough, but their extensive archival footage of gadabouts slugging mint juleps in cabarets and frolicking naked in fields is upstaged by the interviews surrounding it. "We had an interview with one of the other ones," says Friedman, "but at the last minute, he didn't want the camera in his apartment. He was afraid of what the neighbors might think." "And the other one," says Epstein hesitatingly, "has optioned his story and didn't want to talk to us." The interviews were a tumultuous, emotionally draining process for both parties: "It was incredibly difficult to gain their trust," Epstein says, "and a lot of them were still so angry and pent-up with rage, they found it difficult to relate their stories, no matter how much they wanted to." Especially Pierre Seel, who at 17 was sent to a concentration camp, where he was systematically raped and tortured: "He ended up directing all of his rage at us," says Friedman. "We weren't really sure we were going to get his story at all. We didn't do the interview as planned, but what we ended up capturing is something a lot more powerful." *Paragraph 175* opens September 13 at Film Forum.



Derek de Koff

'Cue' cover photograph by Ivan Kyncl.

ema. Waters tosses out some funny ideas here, and Griffith, as a combination Gorgon and den mother, is incongruously funny. But this satiric attack on Hollywood garbage isn't much of a feat, filmmaking-wise, which sours the satire. Waters, in his public appearances, remains his own best creation; his movies are almost superfluous by comparison. (Rainer; 8/21/00) (1 hr. 28. mins; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; Clearview's Chelsea.*

The Cell—A child therapist (Jennifer Lopez) who's involved with a revolutionary research program is politely invited into the mind of a comatose serial killer (Vincent D'Onofrio) in the hopes of rescuing his latest victim. (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) *CC Village East; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**Chicken Run**—The Bristol, England–based Aardman Studios have fashioned their first feature-length claymation movie, and it's a pip: a prison-break movie starring chickens, a kind of egg-layer *Stalag 17.* The concept itself is funny, but co-directors Nick Park and Peter Lord bring in a lot more, including an assortment of hens who together make up a panorama of British spinsterhood. Mel Gibson is the voice of the Rhode Island rooster who helps with the rescue, and he's jauntier here than he is in *The Patriot.* (Rainer; 7/10/00) (1 hr. 33 mins.; G) *UA Union Square; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

Clouds—A physics professor (Michael Patrick Gaffney) learns a thing or two about love in this postmodern world from a beautiful, mysterious woman (Jennifer Jordan Day). (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) *CC Village East; Clearview's Chelsea.*

Coyote Ugly—An aspiring songwriter from Jersey (Piper Perabo) comes to New York to Make It and, as so often happens in a Jerry Bruckheimer movie, ends up wriggling on a bartop with a bevy of other Barbies while unshaven men slaver and whoop. By comparison, *Flashdance* seems like *Copenhagen.* Dreadful. (Rainer; 8/14/00) (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) *Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

The Crew—Four curmudgeons (Burt Reynolds, Seymour Cassel, Richard Dreyfuss, and Dan Hedaya) attempt to hoodwink the manager of the retirement home in which they live. Directed by Michael Dinner. (1 hr. 28 mins.; PG-13) *CC Village East; CC Crown Gotham; Sony Lincoln Square; Pavilion; Cinemart; UA Astoria; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**Croupier**—Mike Hodges, the much-underrated English director, teams with screenwriter Paul Mayersberg in this sharp, cool drama about a would-be novelist, smashingly played by Clive Owen, who works as a croupier in a posh London casino. (Rainer; 5/1/00) (1 hr. 29 mins.; NR) *The Screening Room; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Atrium.*

Dark Days—Marc Singer's fascinating documentary about the legendary Mole People, homeless folk who live deep within the bowels of Manhattan's subway system. (1 hr. 20 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

The Eyes of Tammy Faye—A mocking, self-satisfied documentary about the weepy evangelist–mascara maven. (1 hr. 19 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village.*

Frequency—Jim Caviezal plays a Queens cop who, courtesy of a rip in the space-time continuum and an old ham radio, communicates with his firefighter father (Dennis Quaid), who perished in a blaze in 1969. The radio isn't the only thing that's ham in this misguided hunk of heartfelt mumbo-jumbo. (Rainer; 5/8/00) (2 hrs. 1 min.; R) *CO Worldwide Cinemas.*

★**Girl on the Bridge**—Patrice Leconte's stylish, opportunistic romance mixes up everything from Fellini and Ophuls to forties film noir and fairy tales and occultism. Daniel Auteuil plays a has-been knife-thrower, and Vanessa Paradis is his new recruit in the act. They have an intriguing Svengali-Trilby thing

Six Lost Souls in Search of a Little Harmony.

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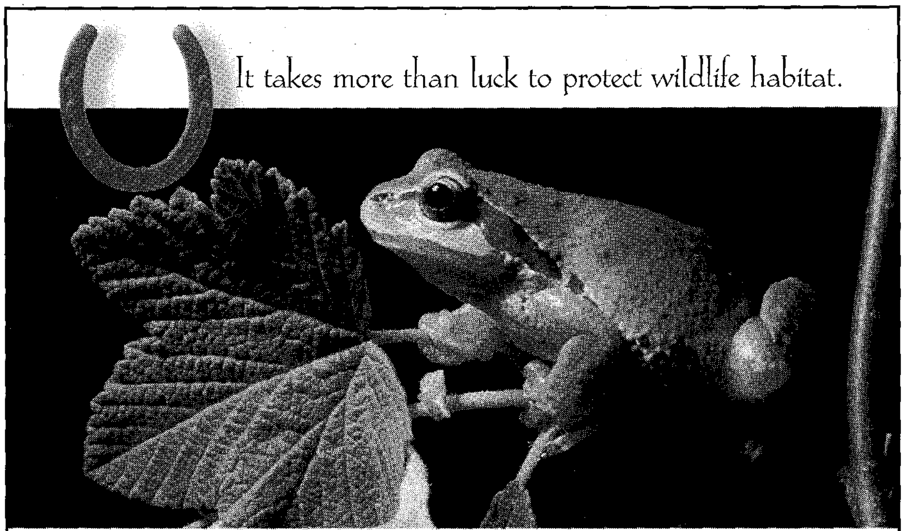

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going on, and the knife-throwing scenes are so rattling that you leave the theater grateful you weren't nicked. (Rainer; 8/7/00) (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) *Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

★**Gladiator**—Ridley Scott's latest is an attempt to make a Roman epic on the scale of *Spartacus* or *Ben-Hur* while, at the same time, presenting us with a hero, Russell Crowe's Maximus, who is monumentally withdrawn. Crowe's intensity holds the film together. Richard Harris, Joaquin Phoenix, and, in his last role, Oliver Reed contribute some entertaining moments. (Rainer; 5/15/00) (2 hrs. 30 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; UA Gemini; Pavilion.*

Godzilla 2000—This authentic Japanese installment, twenty-third in the saga, finds that incorrigible reptile with the glued-on dorsal fins battling a brand-new nemesis: Orga (a.k.a. Giant Alien Millennian). (1 hr. 39 mins.; PG) *Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Atrium.*

Highlander: Endgame—With any luck, the name says it all. (1 hr. 26 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Hollow Man—Hollow movie. Kevin Bacon plays a mad scientist who gets even madder when he injects himself with a serum that causes him to become invisible without, as it turns out, the prospect of once again being visible. Director Paul Verhoeven doesn't play this material for its fun, lowdown voyeuristic possibilities; he seems more intent on allegory. The film ends being nowhere; it's neither Plato nor porno. Most of the time we're stuck in the top-secret lab with Bacon as he fumes and fidgets, which seems a waste of a promising premise. Elisabeth Shue and Josh Brolin co-star, matching dullards. (Rainer; 8/14/00) (1 hr. 54 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Cinemart; UA Astoria.*

I'm the One That I Want—Margaret Cho's critically acclaimed one-woman show, in which she recounts her grim experiences starring in a fast-canceled ABC sitcom, finally makes it to the big screen. (1 hr. 36 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

★**Jesus' Son**—Billy Crudup and Samantha Morton are marvelous in this uneven adaptation of Denis Johnson's episodic book about a saintly stoner. The director, Alison Maclean, has a fine, intuitive way with actors and a gift for portraying poetic disarray, but much of the movie has a seventies-era scruffiness that often tails off into sentimentality and oh-wowness. (Rainer; 7/3/00) (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) *The Screening Room.*

Love & Sex—Kate (Fanme Janssen) is a jaded twentysomething who's totally over dating—until that kinky, responsible ex-boyfriend reenters her life. Hmm . . . maybe she should give it another shot? (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) *Clearview's 62nd and Broadway; UA Marboro; Kew Gardens Cinemas; UA Movieworld.*

★**Madadayo**—Akira Kurosawa's last film, made in 1993 but only being released now, is a highly formalized and serene work about a beloved university professor (Tatsuo Matsumura) and his students. It's a movie about how kindness keeps one from despair, and it has a valedictory quality that ultimately is profoundly moving. (Rainer; 9/4/00) (2 hrs.; NR) *Cinema Village.*

Nurse Betty—Neil LaBute directed this one but didn't write it, which probably explains why it lacks his usual note of noxious misanthropy. It's a rather sweet and blobby romantic comedy starring Renée Zellweger as a Kansas waitress who, in a fugue state following the murder of her crumbum car-salesman husband, hits the road for L.A. to find her true dreamboat: a soap-opera actor (Greg Kinnear) who she believes is really the character he is playing. Morgan Freeman and Chris Rock turn up as hit men trailing Betty, and they have a funny rapport. (Rainer; 9/11/00) (1 hr. 49 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews Coronet; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; Clearview's Olympia; New Coliseum; Nova; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; BAM Rose Cinemas; Clearview's Cobble Hill; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Canarsie; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**Nutty Professor 2: The Klumps**—Eddie Murphy once again divides himself up into an entire family, and he gives an extraordinarily rich performance in what is otherwise a gross-out teen pic. His ripening artistry deserves a better movie. (Rainer; 8/14/00) (2 hrs.; PG-13) *Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Kew Gardens Cinemas; Atrium.*

The Opportunists—Christopher Walken plays a good man who's trying to let go of his crooked past. Co-stars Cyndi Lauper as his ballsy wife. (1 hr. 29 mins.; R) *CC Village East.*

The Original Kings of Comedy—Spike Lee takes a swing at the stand-up-comedy-concert genre, documenting the talents of Steve Harvey, D. L. Hughley, Bernie Mac, and Cedrid the Entertainer. (2 hrs. 12 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Cinemart; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Crossbay; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

The Perfect Storm—Wolfgang Petersen's epic based on the Sebastian Junger nonfiction best-seller has an impressive assortment of computer-generated waves and lots of men yelling to be heard above the sound of those waves. George Clooney plays the skipper of a swordfishing ship that heads out from Gloucester into perhaps the worst nautical storm ever recorded. His thin dark beard goes grayish as the waves hit. Except as spectacle, the film isn't much. The mythic-heroic stuff lacks an undercurrent, and you keep asking yourself why these men are risking so much when there's an easy way out. Mark Wahlberg, Diane Lane, and John C. Reilly co-star. (7/10/00) (2 hrs. 10 mins.; PG-13) *Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Clearview's Cobble Hill.*

Place Vendôme—Catherine Deneuve plays the alcoholic widow of a debt-ridden gem dealer in this moody, well-paced drama directed by Nicole Garcia. Deneuve seems to have grown into her world-weariness: She's radiantly sodden here. (Rainer; 8/38/00) (1 hr. 37 mins.; NR) *Paris Theatre.*

Pokémon The Movie 2000—Those ubiquitous Japanese action figures make their inevitable return to the big screen. (1 hr. 54 mins.; G) *CO Worldwide Cinemas; Concourse Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

★**Pola X**—Leos Carax, bad boy of French cinema, directed this startling free-form adaptation of Herman Melville's novel *Pierre, or the Ambiguities,* and it's maddening, fascinating, rapt. Carax accomplishes what all successful literary adaptations must: He conveys the emotions we felt when we read the book. Guillaume Depardieu and Katerina Golubeva star as the brother and half-sister fated for destruction. (Rainer; 8/11/00) (1 hr. 34 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center.*

Psycho Beach Party—Charles Busch stars in and co-wrote this satire about a 16-year-old beach babe (Lauren Abrose) who suffers from multiple-personality disorder and might be a cold-blooded killer. (1 hr. 25 mins.; NR) *The Screening Room.*

The Replacements—This movie deserves a historical footnote for being the most rabidly anti-union movie in memory. Gene Hackman is a football coach who is brought in during a pro-league strike to shape up a team of replacements headed by quarterback Keanu Reeves. The scabs are all goony and lovable and the pros are all pond scum. (Rainer; 8/28/00) (2 hrs.; PG-13) *Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews New York Twin; Kew Gardens Cinemas; Atrium.*

RiFiFi—All but unseen since its 1955 release, Jules Dassin's triumphantly amoral crime thriller boasts, among other things, a 30-minute robbery scene sans music or dialogue. (1 hr. 58 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Road Trip—A raunchy comedy that aims, apparently, to outdo *American Pie* finds four friends traveling 1,800 miles in search of a smutty videotape accidentally mailed to one of their girlfriends. Co-stars Beckin Meyer, Tom Green, and Andy Dick. (1 hr., 45 mins.; R) *CO Worldwide Cinemas.*

Saving Grace—Brenda Blethyn stars as Grace, a doddering old widow who, faced with a huge debt and the possibility of losing her house, comes up with a scheme to transform her garden into a veritable hemp highway. (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; UA East; BAM Rose Cinemas; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Pavilion; UA Marboro; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Movies at Bayside; YWCA Cine-Club.*

Scary Movie—A half-baked satire of modern teen splatter flicks from Keenan Ivory Wayans. (1 hr. 28

Retrospective

Chop Shtick

Since its founding in 1996, Hong Kong's Milkyway Image Productions has made a name for itself by reinvigorating the incredibly stale action genre, skirting the line between satire and all-out bullet-to-the-head flexing in its twelve (so far) blood-daubed features. Hence the Anthology Film Archives' "Expect the Unexpected," a retrospective that begins this week with 'Too Many Ways to Be Number One.' What shouldn't be unexpected: a badly translated title, a gangster named Doggie (Lau Ching-Wan, pictured), a grisly hit-and-run homicide, and more tongue-in-cheek parody than you'd expect from this synopsis. Begins September 15.

Photograph courtesy of Subway Cinema.

mins.; R) *Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

Shaft—John Singleton's new version of the seventies blaxploitation hit stars Samuel L. Jackson in the Richard Roundtree role. Like its predecessor, the film seems to really be about stylishness as a form of militancy. Jackson is so burned up about everything that he never has time to be a sex machine, and so the Isaac Hayes theme song sounds more like a taunt than a tribute. Christian Bale, in what amounts to a recap of his *American Psycho* sicko, plays a racist murderer, and Jeffrey Wright is effective as a Dominican drug lord. (Rainer; 7/3/00) (1 hr. 34 mins.; R) *Loews State.*

Shower—This bittersweet examination of Chinese culture takes place in a public bathhouse about to be closed down by a young entrepreneur. (1 hr., 32 mins.; PG-13) *North Shore Towers.*

Small Time Crooks—Woody Allen's new movie isn't just minor, it's minuscule. It harkens back not to the early classics like *Bananas* and *Sleeper,* but even further back to the Milquetoast humor of *Take the Money and Run.* Allen and Tracey Ullman are a working-class Manhattan couple on the shady side of the law who strike it rich. Allen plays up the comedy of nouveau riche bad taste, but his comic affinities are elsewhere; most of what we see here is labored. Best reason to go: Elaine May's marvelous turn as a holy-fool dimwit. (Rainer; 5/29/00) (1 hr. 35 mins.; PG-13) *CO Worldwide Cinemas.*

Smiling Fish & Goat on Fire—Two brothers (Derick and Steven Martini) with eccentric nicknames just want to meet the right women and settle down. And, of course, they do. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

Solas—Ana Fernández stars as an impoverished, troubled young beauty whose mother (María Galiana) attempts to rescue her from impending emotional collapse. (1 hr. 38 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Solomon and Gaenor—A young Orthodox Jewish boy (Ioan Gruffudd) and a miner's daughter (Nia Roberts) have an ill-fated love affair in 1911 Wales. Nominated for Best Foreign Language Film at this year's Academy Awards. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema; CC Eastside Playhouse.*

Space Cowboys—Clint Eastwood stars in and directs this over-the-hill-gang buddyfest starring himself, James Garner, Tommy Lee Jones, and Donald Sutherland as ex–Air Force pilots who, 40 years after they were screwed by NASA, finally get their shot on a space mission. (They have to fix a Russian satellite!) It's genial at times, but the movie-star cronyism gets in the way of your enjoyment, and there's no bliss in this film's view of outer space. The old astronauts might as well be day laborers at the planetarium. (Rainer; 8/14/00) (2 hrs.; PG-13) *UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 72nd St. East; Loews Orpheum 7; Sony Lincoln Square; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**Sunshine**—Istvan Szábó's highly uneven, sprawling yet schematic epic encompasses three generations of a Jewish Hungarian family, as well as most of the political horrors of the twentieth century. Szábó's movies, most famously *Mephisto* and *Colonel Redl,* are all about the bloody confluence of politics and matters of the heart. He's fascinated by the fatalism of history and by the ways in which people fight the inevitability of their fate. His new film carries on these themes on an even broader canvas, but often he seems to be inflating the usual recriminations and capitulations of a family by placing it against the Holocaust and the Gulag. Ralph Fiennes plays three separate roles, but he's too refined, too Dirk Bogarde–ish, to hold this behemoth of a movie together. (Rainer; 6/19/00) (3 hrs.; NR) *Clearview's First & 62nd St.; North Shore Towers.*

The Tao of Steve—In Jenniphr Goodman's directorial debut, Donal Logue plays Dex, a way-overweight rogue who still manages to be lucky with the ladies despite his size-44 jeans. Greer Goodman plays Syd, the one woman who's seemingly insusceptible to his charms. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; BAM Rose Cinemas; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

This Is Spinal Tap—Rob Reiner's classic satire of the heavy-metal scene, starring Michael McKean, Christopher Guest, and Harry Shearer. (1 hr. 22 mins.; R) *UA Union Square.*

Turn It Up—Expect lots of blood and .22s in this crime thriller starring the Fugees' Pras, who plays an aspiring young hip-hop artist who falls in with a band of villains. Co-stars Ja-Rule and Vondie Curtis-Hall. (1 hr. 34 mins.; R) *CC Village East; Clearview's Chelsea West; Loews Orpheum 7; New Coliseum; Nova; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Ridgewood; Canarsie; Cinemart; Jackson Triplex; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay.*

Up at the Villa—Enervated adaptation of the Somerset Maugham novella about murder and romance, set in Fascist Tuscany and starring Sean Penn and Kristin Scott Thomas as unlikely conspirators. (Rainer; 5/15/00) (1 hr. 55 mins.; PG-13) .

The Virgin Suicides—The material—five suburban adolescent girls kill themselves off, poetically, inexplicably—is perhaps too woozy for the rueful, mythological treatment it gets here, but debut director Sofia Coppola has a fine, fresh eye and a way with actors, among them Kirsten Dunst, James Woods, and Kathleen Turner. (Rainer; 5/1/00) (1 hr. 37 mins.; R) *Clearview's Waverly.*

The Watcher—James Spader stars as an ex–FBI agent who (surprise, surprise) comes out of retirement in the hopes of capturing his old nemesis, a creepy serial killer played by (boo!) Keanu Reeves. (1 hr. 32 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Loews 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Pavilion; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.*

The Way of the Gun—Ryan Phillipe and Benicio Del Toro play two hardened criminals whose attempt to kidnap a wealthy woman (Juliette Lewis) gets seriously botched. Written by *The Usual Suspects* screenwriter Christopher McQuarrie. (2 hrs.; R) *UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; UA Gemini; Loews 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; YWCA Cine-Club.*

★**What Lies Beneath**—Crude scare-picture pulp done up in big-movie-star trappings. Michelle Pfeiffer plays a woman who believes the inherited Vermont home she shares with her scientist husband (Harrison Ford) is spook-infested. The director Robert Zemeckis draws on a whole stable of woman-in-peril warhorses, from *Gaslight* to *Wait Until Dark;* he lifts from Hitchcock and *Fatal Attraction* and much more. The results are effective without being very interesting: It is not such a great achievement, in the end, to make audiences jump on cue; even the teen horror cheapies are pretty adept at it, if nothing else. But Michelle Pfeiffer's performance is something to see. Terror seems to turn her wraithlike. (2 hrs. 25 mins.; PG-13) *Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews Astor Plaza; Loews New York Twin; Loews Orpheum 7; Sony Lincoln Square; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Atrium; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Whipped—Three college buddies discuss their sexual exploits every Sunday at the local diner, until they all fall for the same woman, for whom they might actually be willing to commit. Peter M. Cohen wrote and directed. (1 hr. 22 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42 Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Sony Lincoln Square; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; College Point Multiplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Midway; Atrium; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**X-Men**—Bryan Singer's cinematic transcription of the Marvel Comic mainstay has intermittent, balled-up power. It's a rarity, a comic-book-derived movie with a satisfying visual style and protagonists you want to watch. The X-Men include Wolverine (Hugh Jackman), Rogue (Anna Paquin), Cyclops (James Marsden), and their fearless leader, Professor Xavier (Patrick Stewart),

Retrospective

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Since the slasher-film revival has breathed its last, and with Billy Bob Thornton's adaptation of *All the Pretty Horses* on the horizon, the spaghetti Western is a likely (if unfortunate) candidate for Next Shelved Genre to Reappear. Pop-culture junkies wishing to bone up on the formula's past have the perfect opportunity this week, as "Ride Lonesome: A Budd Boetticher Retrospective" kicks into gear. The Hollywood vet, at 83 one of the last surviving members of the cinematic old school, is an uncontestable master of the genre. His series of Westerns, all of which starred Randolph Scott, will be screened in its entirety—including *The Tall T; The Rise and Fall of Legs Diamond* (pictured); and his magnum opus, *Comanche Station.* Begins September 16 at the American Museum of the Moving Image.

Photograph courtesy of Photofest.

while their supermutant antagonists include Ian McKellan's Magneto and Toad (Ray Park), who can flick his twelve-foot tongue like it was a lasso. Adolescents, and probably not a few adults, will appreciate the film's celebration of being different. We're not dorks, after all—we're the next stage in evolution. (7/24/00) (2 hrs.; PG-13) *CC Village East; Clearview's Ziegfeld; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Cinemart; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

CC Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (212-995-2000) *Cecil B. Demented; The Girl on the Bridge; Pola X; Saving Grace; Smiling Fish & Goat on Fire; The Tao of Steve.*

CC Village East—189 Second Ave. (212-529-6799) *Backstage; The Cell; Clouds; The Crew; The Opportunists; Turn It Up; X-Men.*

Cinema Village—22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363) *Bittersweet Motel; The Eyes of Tammy Faye; Madadayo.*

Clearview's Waverly—323 Sixth Ave. (777-FILM#603) *The Ballad of Ramblin' Jack; The Virgin Suicides.*

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110) *Dark Days.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Loews Village—66 Third Ave. (50-LOEWS#952) *Bless the Child; Highlander: Endgame; Hollow Man; Nurse Betty; The Original Kings of Comedy.*

Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (212-255-8800) *Aimée & Jaguar; I'm the One That I Want; Orfeu; Solomon and Gaenor.*

The Screening Room—54 Varick St. (212-334-2100) *Benjamin Smoke; Croupier; The Decalogue; Jesus' Son; Psycho Beach Party; The Saragossa Manuscript.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

UA Union Square—13th St. and Broadway (212-253-2225) *The Art of War; Autumn in New York; Bring It On; Chicken Run; Gladiator; Ran; Space Cowboys; This Is Spinal Tap; The Watcher; The Way of the Gun; Whipped.*

14th–41st Streets

CC Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (212-689-6548) *The Art of War; Backstage; Saving Grace; The Watcher.*

Clearview's Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (777-FILM#597) *The Art of War; Cecil B. Demented; The Cell; Clouds; Highlander: Endgame; Saving Grace; Space Cowboys; The Watcher; The Way of the Gun; Whipped.*

Clearview's Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (777-FILM#614) *Bring It On; Turn It Up.*

Loews 19th St. East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (50-LOEWS#858) *Backstage; Nurse Betty; The Original Kings of Comedy; What Lies Beneath.*

Loews Kips Bay Theatre—570 Second Ave. (505-6397#558) *Autumn in New York; Bless the Child; Bring It On; The Cell; Highlander: Endgame; Nurse Betty; The Original Kings of Comedy; The Perfect Storm; The Replacements; Space Cowboys; What Lies Beneath; Whipped.*

42nd–60th Streets

CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (212-753-6022) *The Cell; Highlander: Endgame; Saving Grace.*

CC Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (212-759-2262) *The Crew.*

CC Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (212-755-3020) *Solomon and Gaenor.*

CC Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (212-759-1411) *Backstage; Butterfly.*

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer…A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element…Reviews are followed by the theaters where the film is playing.

Retrospective
Oliver's Army

Whether you love to hate him or simply hate him, Oliver Stone (pictured) is nothing if not a directorial force. Beginning September 14, the Museum of Modern Art kicks off "Oliver Stone, Filmmaker," a "mid-career" retrospective showing each of his fourteen feature films, from 1974's 'Seizure' (a struggling writer's characters materialize before his very eyes—just like when you tried writing that play in college) to 1999's 'Any Given Sunday' (football is life, life is football, etc.). Even serious Stoners are advised to steer clear of 'Natural Born Killers,' that icky marvel that manages to be both horrific and horrifically boring.

Clearview's 59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (777-FILM#615) *The Brooklyn Film Festival.*

Clearview's Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (777-FILM#602) *X-Men.*

CO Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *American Psycho; Big Momma's House; Frequency; Mission: Impossible 2; The Patriot; Pokémon The Movie 2000; Road Trip; Small Time Crooks.*

Loews 42nd Street E Walk—42nd Street at Eighth Ave. (50-LOEWS#572) *The Art of War; The Cell; Nutty Professor 2: The Klumps; The Original Kings of Comedy; Scary Movie; The Watcher; Whipped.*

Loews Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (50-LOEWS#699) *What Lies Beneath.*

Loews Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *Nurse Betty.*

Loews State—1540 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (50-LOEWS#901) *Blood Simple; High Fidelity; Shaft; Titanic Town.*

Paris Theatre—4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800) *Place Vendôme.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

CC 86th St. East—210 E. 86th St. (777-FILM#763) *Bring It On; The Crew; Highlander: Endgame; The Replacements.*

Clearview's Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (777-FILM#606) *Autumn in New York.*

Clearview's First & 62nd St.—400 E. 62nd St. (777-FILM#957) *Bring It On; Croupier; Girl on the Bridge; Sunshine; The Tao of Steve; The Watcher; Whipped.*

Clearview's Park and 86th St.—125 E. 86th St. (777-FILM#604) *Nurse Betty; The Way of the Gun.*

Loews 72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (50-LOEWS#704) *Space Cowboys.*

Loews New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (50-LOEWS#698) *The Replacements; What Lies Beneath.*

Loews Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (50-LOEWS#964) *The Art of War; The Cell; The Original Kings of Comedy; Space Cowboys; Turn It Up; The Watcher; What Lies Beneath.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (212-249-5100) *Saving Grace.*

UA Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (212-832-1670) *The Art of War; Gladiator; The Way of the Gun.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

Clearview's 62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (777-FILM#864) *Love & Sex.*

Clearview's Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (777-FILM#609) *The Cell; The Watcher.*

Clearview's Olympia—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (777-FILM#613) *Bring It On; Nurse Betty.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (212-757-2280) *Aimée & Jaguar; An Affair of Love; Orfeu; RiFiFi; Solas; The Tao of Steve; The Wind Will Carry Us.*

Loews 84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (50-LOEWS#701) *The Art of War; Backstage; The Original Kings of Comedy; The Watcher; The Way of the Gun.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (212-740-1545) *The Art of War; Bring It On; Nurse Betty; Turn It Up.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (212-862-5728) *The Art of War; Nurse Betty; Turn It Up.*

Sony Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (50-LOEWS#638) *Autumn in New York; Bless the Child; Bring It On; The Cell; The Crew; Highlander: Endgame; Nurse Betty; Space Cowboys; Turn It Up; What Lies Beneath; Whipped.*

Bronx

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (777-FILM#833) *The Art of War; Backstage; Bless the Child; Bring It On; The Cell; Highlander: Endgame; Nurse Betty; Nutty Professor 2: The Klumps; The Original Kings of Comedy; Turn It Up; The Watcher; The Way of the Gun.*

Photograph courtesy of Photofest.

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (718-588-8800) *The Art of War; Backstage; Bless the Child; Bring It On; The Cell; Godzilla 2000; Highlander: Endgame; Hollow Man; Nutty Professor 2: The Klumps; The Original Kings of Comedy; Pokémon The Movie 2000; Turn It Up.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (718-409-9030) *The Art of War; Backstage; Bless the Child; Bring It On; The Cell; Dinosaur; Godzilla 2000; Gone in Sixty Seconds; Highlander: Endgame; Hollow Man; Nutty Professor 2: The Klumps; The Original Kings of Comedy; Turn It Up; What Lies Beneath; Whipped; X-Men.*

Brooklyn

BAM Rose Cinemas—30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-623-2770) *Nurse Betty; Saving Grace; The Tao of Steve.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Brooklyn Heights—70 Henry St. (718-596-7070) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Clearview's Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (718-596-9113) *Butterfly; Nurse Betty; The Perfect Storm; Saving Grace; Smiling Fish & Goat on Fire; The Brooklyn Film Festival.*

CO Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy., at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (718-338-3371) *The Art of War; The Original Kings of Comedy; Turn It Up.*

Linden Boulevard Multiplex—Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (718-277-0303) *The Art of War; Bless the Child; Bring It On; Bring It On; The Cell; Godzilla 2000; Highlander: Endgame; Hollow Man; Nutty Professor 2: The Klumps; The Original Kings of Comedy; Pokémon The Movie 2000; Turn It Up; What Lies Beneath; Whipped; X-Men.*

Pavilion—188 Prospect Park West (718-369-0838) *The Art of War; Bring It On; The Cell; The Crew; Dinosaur; Gladiator; Saving Grace; The Watcher; The Way of the Gun; Whipped.*

Ridgewood—55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (718-821-5993) *The Art of War; Bring It On; The Cell; Highlander: Endgame; Turn It Up.*

UA Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (718-232-4000) *Bring It On; Love & Sex; Saving Grace; The Watcher.*

UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy, off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (718-615-1700) *The Art of War; Autumn in New York; Bring It On; The Cell; Highlander: Endgame; Nurse Betty; The Watcher; The Way of the Gun; What Lies Beneath; Whipped.*

Queens

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (718-251-0700) *The Art of War; Nurse Betty; Turn It Up.*

Centre Sunnyside—42-17 Queens Blvd. (718-361-6869) *Bring It On; The Cell; Highlander: Endgame; The Watcher; The Way of the Gun.*

Cinemart—106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (718-261-2244) *Butterfly; The Crew; Hollow Man; The Original Kings of Comedy; Turn It Up; X-Men.*

CO Cinema City—183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Rd. at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *Call theater for showtimes.*

College Point Multiplex—28-55 Ulmer St., Whitestone (718-886-4900) *The Art of War; Autumn in New York; Bless the Child; Bring It On; The Cell; The Crew; Highlander: Endgame; Hollow Man; Nurse Betty; The Original Kings of Comedy; Turn It Up; The Watcher; What Lies Beneath; Whipped; X-Men.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (718-478-6777) *The Art of War; The Cell; Turn It Up.*

Kaufman Astoria Cinema—38th St. at 35th Ave. (718-786-2020) *Bring It On; The Cell; Coyote Ugly; Croupier; Dinosaur; Gone in Sixty Seconds; Nutty Professor 2: The Klumps; The Original Kings of Comedy; Saving Grace; Scary Movie; Space Cowboys; The Tao of Steve; Tera Jadoo Chal Gaya; What Lies Beneath; Whipped; X-Men.*

Kew Gardens Cinemas—81-05 Lefferts Blvd. (718-441-9835) *Aimée & Jaguar; Chicken Run; Girl on the Bridge; Love & Sex; Nutty Professor 2: The Klumps; Pokémon The Movie 2000; The Replacements; Smiling Fish & Goat on Fire; The Tao of Steve.*

Main Street Cinemas—72-66 Main St. (718-263-4828) *The Art of War; Bring It On; The Cell; Highlander: Endgame; The Watcher; The Way of the Gun.*

North Shore Towers—27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (718-229-7702) *Hamlet; Shower; Sunshine.*

Plaza—103-14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (718-639-0012) *The Art of War; Bring It On.*

Sony Bay Terrace—211-01 26th Ave., at Bell Blvd., Bayside (777-FILM#712) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Sony Elmwood—57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (777-FILM#733) *Call theater for showtimes.*

UA Astoria—28-60 Steinway St. (718-726-1279) *The Art of War; Bless the Child; The Crew; Highlander: Endgame; Hollow Man; Turn It Up; The Watcher.*

UA Brandon Cinema—70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (718-544-1020) *Saving Grace; The Way of the Gun.*

UA Crossbay—94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (718-848-1738) *Backstage; The Original Kings of Comedy; Turn It Up.*

UA Crossbay II—92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (718-641-5330) *The Art of War; Bless the Child; Bring It On; The Cell; Highlander: Endgame; Nurse Betty; The Watcher; The Way of the Gun.*

UA Midway—108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (718-544-5545) *The Art of War; Autumn in New York; Bring It On; The Cell; Highlander: Endgame; Nurse Betty; Space Cowboys; The Watcher; What Lies Beneath; Whipped.*

UA Movies at Bayside—38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (718-225-7711) *Bring It On; Saving Grace; The Watcher; The Way of the Gun.*

UA Movieworld—242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (718-423-7200) *The Art of War; Autumn in New York; The Cell; Highlander: Endgame; Love & Sex; Nurse Betty; The Watcher; The Way of the Gun.*

Staten Island

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (718-317-8300) *Autumn in New York; Bless the Child; Bring It On; The Crew; Croupier; Godzilla 2000; Highlander: Endgame; Nutty Professor 2: The Klumps; The Replacements; Space Cowboys; What Lies Beneath; Whipped.*

UA Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (718-351-0805) *The Art of War; Bring It On; Highlander: Endgame; The Watcher; The Way of the Gun; Whipped.*

UA Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (718-983-9600) *The Art of War; Bring It On; The Cell; The Crew; Highlander: Endgame; Nurse Betty; The Original Kings of Comedy; Space Cowboys; The Watcher; The Way of the Gun; What Lies Beneath; Whipped.*

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of the Moving Image—9/16: "Ride Lonesome: A Budd Boetticher Retrospective." *The Missing Juror* (1944); *Horizons West* (1952); *The Killer Is Loose* (1956). 9/17: *The Bullfighter and the Lady* (1951); *Ride Lonesome* (1959). "Repertory Nights: New Prints of Classic Movies." 9/16–9/17: *Five Easy Pieces* (1970). 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077). Tickets, $4.50–$8.50. Members and children under 4, free.

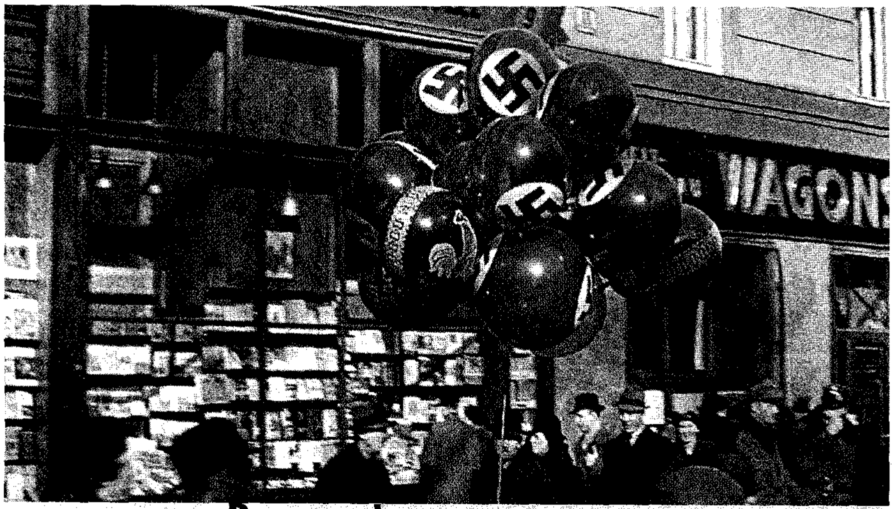
Anthology Film Archives—9/12: *The Bull's Night Out* (1996). 9/13: "New Filmmakers Short Film Program." *Requiem* (1999); *Showered* (2000); *Forever* (1999); *Partners* (1999). "New Filmmakers Feature Presentation." *State of Dogs* (2000). 9/14: "Essential Cinema." *Senseless* (1962). 9/15: "Expect the Unexpected: Contemporary Urban Cinema From Hong Kong's Milkyway Cinema." *Expect the Unexpected* (1998). 32 Second Ave. (212-505-5110); $8.

BAM Rose Cinemas—9/12: *Written on the Wind.* 9/13: *The Big House.* 9/14: *The Man Who Fell to Earth.* 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-623-2770).

Film Forum—Through 9/14: "The Golden Age of the Foreign Film." 9/12: *Kanal* (1956); *Ashes and Diamonds* (1958). 9/13: *Woman in the Dunes* (1964); *Cruel Story of Youth* (1960). 9/14: *The Wages of Fear* (1952); *La Jetée* (1964). 209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110); $9.

Two Boots Pioneer Theater—9/12–9/18: *Raging Bull* (1980); *Wild Flowers* (1999); *Grass* (1999). 155 E. 3rd St. (212-254-3300); $9, $6 seniors.

YWCA Cine-Club—Through 12/17: "Rainer Werner Fassbinder Retrospective." 9/16–9/17: *Mother Kunster Goes to Heaven* (1975). 610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (212-735-9717); $6 members, $7 nonmembers.



Documentary

Children's Crusade

Mark Jonathan Harris, the Academy Award–winning director of *The Long Way Home,* is likely to snatch up a second Oscar for *Into the Arms of Strangers,* an equally wrenching documentary. Narrated by Dame Judi Dench, the film chronicles the plight of the 10,000 endangered Jewish children Britain opened its doors for and called to safety during World War II. Opens September 15.

Photograph courtesy of UCLA Film and Television Archive.

theater

Shattered Boxes...Richard II...Romulus Linney

Broadway

Previews and Openings

Gore Vidal's The Best Man—In 1959, Vidal felt that the true nature of American politics was being occluded by the sunny soft-focus antics of Frank Capra and James Stewart, so he set out to write a tough play that would, he says, "explain to the republic the kind of people who are presidential and why." Chris Noth and Spalding Gray play opposing presidential candidates, joined by Elizabeth Ashley, Charles Durning, Christine Ebersole, Jonathan Hadary, and Michael Learned. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 9/17 opening. *Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (212-239-6200).*

Now Playing

Aida—The epic musical about the love affair between a Nubian slave and a cute Egyptian, with music by Elton John and lyrics by Tim Rice. Directed by Robert Falls with a book by Linda Woolverton and David Henry Hwang. Sets and costumes by Bob Crowley. $25–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Palace Theatre, 1554 Broadway, at 47th St. (212-307-4747).*

Annie Get Your Gun—Cheryl Ladd plays Annie Oakley, the sharp-tongued, sharpshootin' gal from Cincinnati who eclipses her lover, Frank Butler (played by Tom Wopat), in Buffalo Bill's traveling Wild West Show. Irving Berlin did the lyrics and score; Peter Stone updated the book. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Marquis Theatre, 1535 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (212-307-4100).*

Beauty and the Beast—Disney's beast is back (no, not the mouse). Andrea McArdle blanches and blushes as the fair maiden; Steve Blanchard roars and repents as the Beast. $25–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (212-307-4747).*

Cabaret—The Roundabout is to be roundly applauded for re-creating Sam Mendes's 1993 London production, even if with some diminishment. Aided by Rob Marshall as co-director and choreographer, Mendes confirms his directorial reputation with the nightclub scenes. The supporting cast delivers staunchly. Shortcomings notwithstanding, this revival has enough to satisfy all but the most fastidious. (Simon: 3/30/98.) Now starring Lea Thompson. $25–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Opened: 3/19/98. *Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).*

Chicago—It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of this musical to Broadway, but since it's about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Every bosom, pelvis, and long leg is in business to keep the women in the audience identifying, the men panting. (Simon: 11/30/98.) Now featuring Jasmine Guy and Charlotte D'Amboise $20–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 11/14/96. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Contact—This is billed as "a dance play by Susan Stroman and John Weidman," with what little there is of a play mostly by Weidman and the variety and plenitude of the dancing all Stroman. Its two shorter pieces and concluding longer one are of uneven merit but never without interest. Boyd Gaines, a delightful actor and inspired amateur dancer, performs with aplomb. Backed up by a terrific ensemble, Deborah Yates triumphs as the girl in yellow; as dancer, actress, woman, she is every man's dream and headed for a manifest career. (Simon: 10/25/99.) $55–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).*

Copenhagen—A major hit in London, Michael Frayn's heady play about what might have happened when German physicist Werner Heisenberg visited Niels Bohr in 1941 stars Philip Bosco, Blair Brown, and Michael Cumpsty. $40–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Dirty Blonde—Brash actress-author Claudia Shear stars in her new play about two Gotham singles who meet at the grave of Mae West, sampling delicious vignettes from the life of the woman who said, "I'm no angel, but I've spread my wings a bit." $55–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Wed. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Fosse—A tribute to the late choreographer-director, whose swivelin'-hips-and-bowler-hat aesthetic came roaring back with the revival of *Chicago.* $65–$80. Mon., Tues, and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 7, Sat. at 2. *Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Jekyll & Hyde—Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. $45–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 4/28/97. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Kiss Me, Kate—With a score jammed with some of the best-known theater songs ever written, it's no wonder each generation has rediscovered this gem since its 1948 Broadway premiere. Now Brian Stokes Mitchell and Marin Mazzie interpret Cole Porter's feuding couple—two actors who play the Shrew's Kate and Petruchio in a play-within-the-musical. $25–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Opening
Soapbox Derby

Elisabeth Ashley, Spalding Gray, Michael Learned, and 'Sex and the City's Chris Noth (pictured, with Ashley) star in 'Gore Vidal's The Best Man,' the 1960 hit about presidential politics that ran for 520 performances, spawned a film starring Henry Fonda, and impressed fans like Joan Crawford and JFK. "Jack," Vidal recalls, "only had one criticism. He said, 'Candidates don't spend all that time wondering what it's all about, wondering about the meaning of it all.' " Vidal says he responded, " 'You've been running for president for seven years, and I only have two hours. But there are *politicians who wonder about it all, like Adlai Stevenson.' And Jack said, 'That's why* I'm *going to be the nominee.' " Opens September 17. (See "Broadway.")*

Photograph by Peter Cunningham.

Les Misérables—The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean; the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-prosperous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thénardiers bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cosseting their own daughter, Eponine—what a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest of eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $20–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Lion King—This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical.* (Simon: 12/1/97.) $20–$90. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 11/13/97. *New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4747).*

The Man Who Came to Dinner—One of the American theater's funniest farces, this play is much funnier than the same Kaufman and Hart's *You Can't Take It With You,* because it is less good-natured, and amiableness is not what farce is about. The Roundabout Theatre Company has bravely inaugurated its new home, the American Airlines Theatre, with this capital farce, and in Nathan Lane they have found the right man for a risky role. The character is semi-Lane, semi-lion, and the actor nicely adds the bitchy fierceness to his customary campiness. There is not a weak link in the large cast. William Ivey Long's costumes, Paul Gallo's lighting, and especially Tony Walton's set that cunningly mirrors the auditorium's somewhat faded splendor are no less on the mark. (Simon: 8/7/00.) $50–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Through 10/1. *American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. (212-719-1300).*

Miss Saigon—A big helicopter stars in this adaptation of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly.* $20–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/11/91. Through 12/31. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (212-239-6200).*

The Music Man—Back in 1957, Meredith Willson's *The Music Man* made a star out of Robert Preston; the current revival should do the same for Rebecca Luker. As she has steadily demonstrated, she is blessed with the voice, the looks, and the acting talent of a musical-comedy diva. As Marian Paroo, the librarian of River City, Iowa, who goes from tight-lipped spinster to glowing inamorata in this happy show, Miss Luker gives a performance as detailed, nuanced, and cherishable as ever turned a performer into a legend. Susan Stroman's production has other assets as well, but Craig Bierko, the incumbent Harold Hill, gives an impersonation of Preston rather than a performance. (Simon: 5/8/00.) $40–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd. St. (212-307-4100).*

The Phantom of the Opera—Eleven leads, eleven years, and roughly 7 million theatergoers later, Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in. $20–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

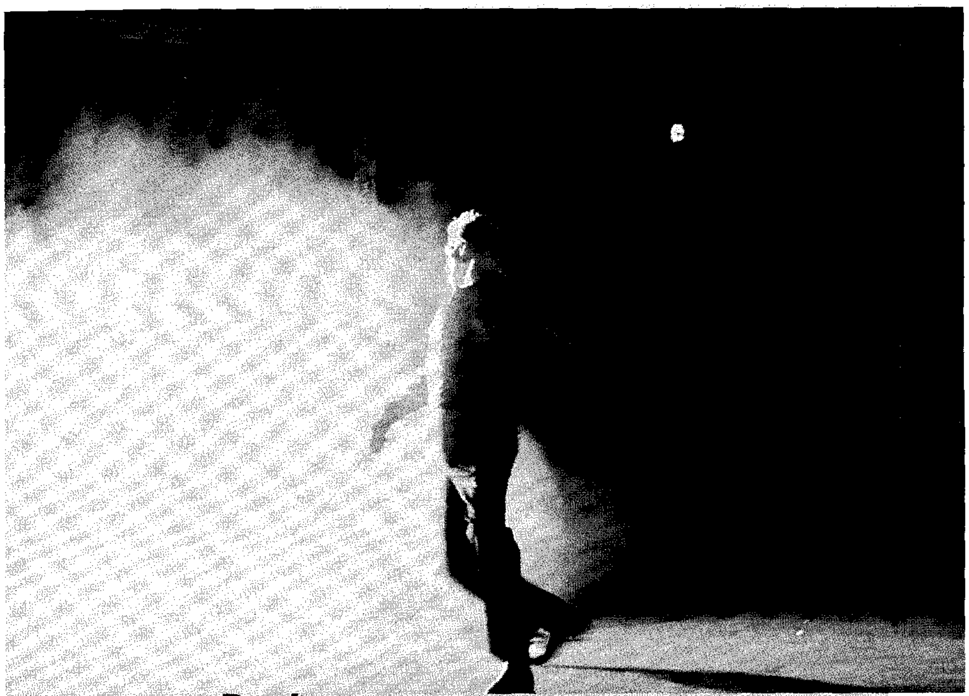
Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary sick and hip types living in the East Village. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (212-307-4100).*

Riverdance—This revamped version returns to New York with a more global feel, featuring flamenco and South African vocals, along with Irish singer Brian Kennedy and dancers Pat Roddy and Eileen Martin. $25–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. (212-307-4100).*

Saturday Night Fever—Flared pants! $35–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (212-307-4100).*

Swing!—The dance marathon begins, with requisite suspenders and flared skirts, in this new musical. $20–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

True West—Josh Brolin and Elias Koteas, replacing Philip Seymour Hoffman and John C. Reilly, smash typewriters and burn toast as Sam Shepard's dysfunctional brothers. Matthew Warchus (*Art*) directs. $65–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Circle-in-the-Square Theatre, W. 50th St., West of Broadway (212-239-6200).*



Photograph by Ivan Kyncl.

Previews
Looking for Richard?

Was that Ralph Fiennes sipping bourbon at Frank's Cocktail Lounge? Could be: He's landed in Fort Greene to play the title roles of both *Coriolanus* and *Richard II* in hit productions by London's Almeida Theatre. Fiennes (pictured), last seen here as a terrifically intense Hamlet, headlines the two works in repertory through October 1 at BAM Harvey Theater. (See "Off Broadway.")

Off Broadway
Previews and Openings

Big Cactus—David T. King's new comedy introduces a furniture-maker who becomes embroiled in a revolutionary cause and begins stealing rare cacti. $15. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8. Previews begin 9/16 for a 9/21 opening. *Curnican Theater, 154 W. 29th St. (212-615-6906).*

The Butterfly Collection—Marian Seldes, Brian Murray, Reed Birney, Betsy Aidem, James Colby, and Maggie Lacey star in a new play about a New England literary family by Theresa Rebeck (*Spike Heels, Loose Knit*). Bartlett Sher (*Waste*) directs. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Previews begin 9/8 for a 10/3 opening. *Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. (212-279-4200).*

Coriolanus/Richard II—Ralph Fiennes and Linus Roache arrive in highly praised Almeida Theatre productions, performed in repertory. $25–$75. Call for schedule. Through 10/1. *BAM Harvey Theater, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn (718-636-4100).*

Henson International Festival of Puppet Theater—Eighteen days of the best puppetry in the world. Highlights include Robert Lepage's *The Far Side of the Moon*, Ronnie Burkett's *Street of Blood*, Albrecht Roser's *Gustaf and his Ensemble,* and Philippe Genty's *Stowaways.* Through 9/28. Call (212-279-4200) for locations, schedule, and prices—and call soon because most events sell out quickly.

The Immigrant—Jacqueline Antaramian, Walter Charles, Cass Morgan, and Evan Pappas star in this new musical about a young Russian Jew who deals with everyday life in Texas. $37.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Previews begin 9/13 for a 9/19 opening. Through 10/7. *CAP21 Theater (212-279-4200).*

A Lesson Before Dying—The Signature Theater Company kicks off a strong twenty-month series of new plays by its veteran playwrights-in-residence, beginning with Romulus Linney's new play, adapted from the Ernest J. Gaines novel about two young black men in 1940s Louisiana. Kent Thompson directs. $47.50. In previews for a 9/17 opening. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Signature Theatre's Peter Norton Space, 555 W. 42nd St. (212-244-PLAY).*

Lifegame—Hoping that audiences haven't felt reality-based-entertainment fatigue, the first of two Off Broadway shows promises to place pre-selected regular folks onstage. In this improvisational piece by the Improbable Theater, the company responsible for last year's delightfully kid-averse *Shockheaded Peter* will be interviewing practical strangers and acting out scenes from their lives. $25–$37.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. Previews begin 9/12 for a 9/28 opening. *Jane Street Theatre at the Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. (212-239-6200).*

Sing-along Sound of Music—Now that the classic film is 35, going on 36, you can reveal the dark secret of your love for Maria—or Rolf. $15–$20. 9/15, 9/16, and 9/18–9/21 at 7:30, 9/16 and 9/17 at 2. *Ziegfeld Theatre, 141 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Syringa Tree—Pamela Gien plays 28 characters in a solo show about a young girl who tries to come to terms with life in 1960s South Africa. $47.50. Tues.–Sat at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 9/14 opening. *Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. (212-307-4100).*

Where Did Vincent Van Gogh?—Dan Castellaneta, the hilarious comedian responsible for the voice of Homer Simpson and a former cast member of the *Tracy Ullman Show,* performs a one-man, many-personalities solo show about an actor whose body is overtaken by aliens while doing a solo show about the painter. $35. Tues.–Sun. at 8, Sun. at 4. Previews begin 9/13 for a 9/20 opening. *Chelsea Playhouse, 125 W. 22nd St. (212-279-4200).*

Now Playing

And God Created Great Whales—Rinde Eckert's terrific production about a piano tuner who attempts to compose an opera based on *Moby Dick.* $35–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 4. Through 10/1. *45 Bleecker Theatre, 45 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).*

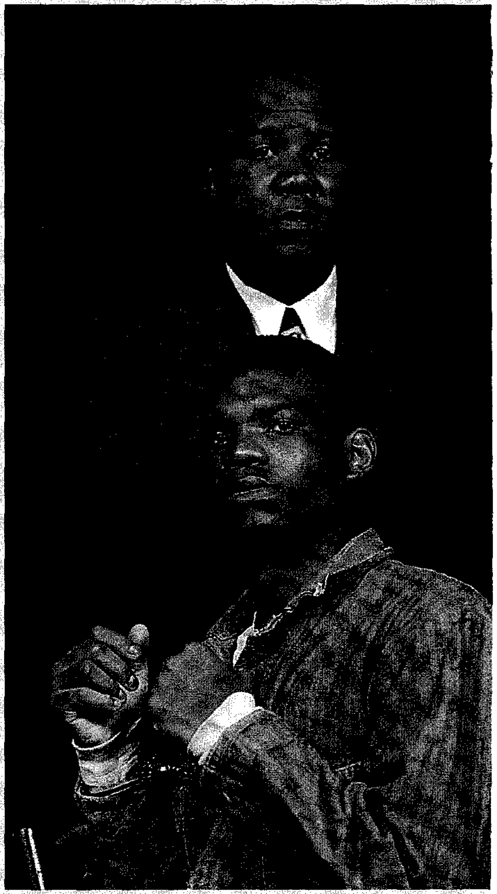
Avow—Jack Hofsiss (*The Elephant Man*) directs Bill C. Davis's new play about same-sex marriage, an unwed mother, and a priest. $47.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Century Center, 111 E. 15th St. (212-239-6200).*

Opening

The Playwright's the Thing

In 1987, southern playwright Romulus Linney cast James Houghton in a production of his drama *Heathen Valley*. "A couple of years later," Linney recalls, "Jim called up and said he had a theater and would like to do a whole season of my plays." Linney laughs before continuing, "I said, 'Now, let me sit down—maybe I'll feel better in a minute.' But he was serious." That was the beginning of the Signature Theatre's unprecedented commitment to dedicate a full year to the works of a single playwright; over the years, the stellar lineup has included Edward Albee, John Guare, Arthur Miller, Sam Shepard, and others. Now in its tenth season, the Signature is trying something different. This week, Linney kicks off a twenty-month celebration of new works by the company's past Playwrights-in-Residence, opening his adaptation of the successful Ernest J. Gaines novel *A Lesson Before Dying* (featuring Isiah Whitlock Jr., pictured standing, with Jamahl Marsh). An Oprah Book Club pick, the novel documents the story of a young Louisiana black man who befriended a schoolteacher shortly before his wrongful execution in 1948. While Linney is excited to premiere his new play, he's also just happy to be back at the Signature. With no dramaturgs and relatively few compromises, Linney says, "The whole raison d'être of the Signature is to allow the playwright to see his work as close as he can get it to what he really wants it to be." In previews for a September 18 opening. (See "Off Broadway.")

LOGAN HILL



Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

Berlin to Broadway with Kurt Weill—A new revue directed by Hal Simons, with musical direction by Eric Stern, who conducted the Kurt Weill celebration at BAM. $45. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 3. *Triad Theatre, 158 W. 72nd St. (212-239-6200).*

Blithe Spirit—Nöel Coward's comedy about death and marriage. $28–$35. Tues. at 7, Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Through 10/15. *Pearl Theatre Company, 80 St. Marks Pl. (212-598-9802).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, *etc.* Wildly inventive, and appropriate for just about everyone—kids, adults, foreigners, haters and lovers of performance art. $45–$55. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 7 and 10, Sat. at 4, 7, and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened: 11/17/91. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (212-254-4370).*

The Countess—Gregory Murphy's costume drama about the love triangle of John Ruskin, his wife, and painter John Everett Millais. $40–$55. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30. *Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. (212-997-1780).*

The Crumple Zone—A new comedy by Buddy Thomas about five men during a holiday weekend. $35. Mon., and Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 10/24. *Rattlestick Theatre, 224 Waverly Place (212-206-1515).*

Cyrano de Bergerac—Fresh off successful productions of *Comedy of Errors* and book one of the *Iliad*, the Aquila Theatre Company presents Edmond Rostand's nosy classic. $30. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7. Through 9/17. *Clark Studio, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza (212-279-4200).*

De La Guarda—A show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. Perfect for theatrical thrill-seekers who don't mind breaking a sweat. $37.50–$45. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. *Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (212-239-6200).*

Dinner With Friends—Karen and Gabe, international food writers, are giving a dinner for their friends Beth and Tom, which Tom doesn't attend. It emerges from the heartbroken Beth that her husband has left her for another woman. There is skillful construction here, as well as keen psychological insight. (Simon: 11/22/99.) Winner of the Pulitzer Prize. $30–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. *Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (212-239-6200).*

Don Juan in Hell—The Irish Rep presents a dramatic reading of the third act from George Bernard Shaw's 1903 *Man and Superman*. Donal Donelly, Celeste Holm, James A. Stephens and Fritz Weaver star. $30–$35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 10/8. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (212-727-2737).*

The Donkey Show—A fantastic, loose disco-musical adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with even looser morals. Very fun. $39. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10:30. *El Flamingo, 547 W. 21st St. (212-307-4100).*

The Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $36.50–$39. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (212-674-3838).*

The Flame Keeper—Amos Kamil's new play about a Jewish professor's return to Berlin in 1946 is directed by Charles Goforth. $45. Mon., and Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. *47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).*

Forbidden Broadway 2001: A Spoof Odyssey—Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way. Now featuring the disco hit "Stayin' Awake." $49.50. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8:15, Sat at 2:30, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30. Food and drink available, optional. *Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (212-239-6200).*

Fully Committed—For the price of an entrée, Becky Mode serves up all the splendors and miseries of restaurant life prepared to a fare-thee-well. Smartly directed by Nicholas Martin, this play is a day in the life of Sam, the young man and struggling actor who works the reservation phones in a four-star restaurant where table 31 seems to be the ne plus ultra of socio-gastronomic achievement. (Simon: 1/17/00.) Now starring the wonderful Roger Bart, who made his name as Snoopy in *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. (212-239-6200).*

Godspell—Lookout, J.C. Superstar, there's another messiah. $45–$50. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Theatre at Saint Peter's Church, 619 Lexington Ave. at 54th St. (212-239-6200).*

High Infidelity—*Falcon Crest* alum Morgan Fairchild and John Davidson star in John Dooley's new comedy about a senator and his wife. $50–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-239-6200).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue is about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love. $49.50–$55. Mon., Tues., Fri., Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).*

Imperfect Chemistry—A new musical comedy about genetics and male-pattern baldness with book and lyrics by James Racheff and story and music by Albert M. Tapper. $50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane (212-307-4100).*

It Ain't Nothin' But the Blues—This Tony-nominated musical about the history of the blues has been scaled down to fit inside the 499-seat B.B. King Blues Club. This new production features three of the original Broadway performers. $50. Mon.–Wed. at 8, Wed. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. *B.B. King Blues Club, 243 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).*

Jerusalem Syndrome—Comedian Mark Maron riffs on his pilgrimages to Israel, Hollywood, and a Philip Morris factory. $25–$30. Wed.–Sat. at 8. *Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. (212-307-4100).*

Kiki & Herb: Playing for Time—The downtown duo open their first open-ended Off Broadway run, after practically reinventing cabaret theater with renditions of crooner classics and slightly less Algonquin tunes by the likes of Patti Smith, Suicidal

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

Tendencies, and Christina Aguilera. $12–$15. Fri.–Sun. at 7:30. *Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).*

Late Night Catechism—Maripat Donovan as a parochial-school teaching nun backed by a magisterium of unassailable moral authority and some mean wrist action with a ruler. $40. Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).*

Manchild in the Promised Land—A stage adaptation of Claude Brown's classic autobiography, set in 1950's Harlem. $35. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *American Place Theater, 111 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).*

Murdered by the Mob—Interactive off-line entertainment with a three-course dinner, door prizes, death, dancing, and acting awards for best audience participation. $55. Fri. at 7:30, Sat. at 7. *Arno Ristorante, 141 W. 38th St. (800-687-3374).*

Naked Boys Singing—Just like a musical revue, but without pants. $45–$65. Mon., Wed.–Fri., and Sun. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3. *Actor's Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. So. (212-239-6200).*

Our Sinatra—Kurt Stamm directs this tribute to Ol' Blue Eyes, now transferred from a successful run at the Algonquin Hotel. Featuring Eric Comstock, Christopher Gines, and Hilary Kole. $50–$80. Mon.–Wed., Fri. and Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 7:30. *Reprise Room at Dylan's, 245 W. 54th (212-239-6200).*

Perfect Crime—The long-running thriller. $35. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 4/5/87. *Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (212-695-3401).*

The Soul of an Intruder—Steve Braunstein's play about a woman involved in a perplexing love triangle returns after a successful 1995 run. $20–$30. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2. Through 9/30. *Theatre 3, 311 W. 43rd St. (212-279-4200).*

Spinning Into Butter—Rebecca Gilman's new play is a brave, honest, intelligent, and important play, which mitigates its being only intermittently well-written. (Simon: 8/7/00.) $50. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Through 9/16. *Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show in which a troupe of performers dances, claps, and generally bangs on everything in sight. $29.50–$55. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave. (212-477-2477).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St.*, then a reception at *Vinnie Black's Coliseum, Hotel Edison, 221 W. 46th St.*, with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and, with more than 4,000 performances, it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. Now starring Domenica Cameron-Scorcese, daughter of Martin. $67.50–$80. Thurs.–Sat. at 7, Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88 *(212-239-6200).*

The Vagina Monologues—Eve Ensler's ode to fannyboos, nappy dugouts, twats, etc., returns for a second coming. What was once Ensler's one-woman show is now performed by trios of actresses. Through 9/24: Ana Gasteyer, Mercedes Ruehl, and Brooke Shields. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).*

Where Everything Is Everything—Daisy Eagan stars in Stephen Spoonamore's new romantic drama about a graphic designer, a financial consultant, and sex in the city. $25–$35. Tues.–Sun. at 8. Through 10/14. *Ryan Theater, 128 Chamber St. (212-539-8892).*

Why We Don't Bomb the Amish—Twenty-one year-old comedienne Casey Fraser riffs on subways, David Koresh, the Amish, and United Nations shindigs. $20. Thurs.–Sat. at 8. *Gershwin Hotel, 7 E. 27th St. (212-279-4200).*

Off-Off Broadway

10 Stories Up—Five one-acts on the roof of Greenwich House. $12. Fri. at 6:30, Sat. and Sun. at 6. Through 10/1. *Greenwich House, 27 Barrow St. (212-245-4036).*

33 Swoons: A Portrait of Anton Chekhov—Chekhov in the renovated, but hardly reformed, porn palace. Mon.: "Undiscovered Chekhov" and "On the High Road." Tues. and Wed.: "Complete Chekhov Vaudevilles" and "Chekhov Sketchbook." Thurs.: "The Seagull." Fri.: "Vanya on 42nd St." $15–$20. Call for schedule. *Nada Show World Theater, 42nd St. and Eighth Ave. (212-586-7829).*

Boxing 2000—Richard Maxwell's new play follows a family of boxers. $15. Wed.–Sat. at 8. Through 9/30. *Present Company Theatorium, 198 Stanton St. (212-420-8877).*

The Cradle Will Rock—You've seen the Tim Robbins movie; now see a new production of Mark Blitzstein's lefty 1937 musical onstage. $24–$30. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 10/19. *Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery (212-677-0060).*

Macbeth—A major hit in a very small way at Fringe, Tiny Ninja Theater presents the Bard's classic, performed entirely by tiny plastic toys. $12. Wed.–Sat. at 7. Through 10/1. *Present Company Artspace, 198 Stanton St. (212-420-8877).*

Middle Finger—Two Filipino-American boys make their way through Catholic school in this new play by Han Ong, a recent recipient of the Macarthur "genius grant." Presented by Ma-Yi Theatre Company. $19. Tues.–Sat. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. In previews for a 9/14 opening. *Blue Heron Arts Center, 121 E. 24th St. (212-841-0370).*

Monday Night Magic—Internationally known magicians. $25–$27.50. Mon. at 8. *Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (212-307-4100).*

Natural Born Pop: 20 from the 20th Century—Highlights of the Pure Pop festival at Nada Classic include Ian W. Hill's fusion of *Apocalypse Now* and *Jungle Book*, titled *Even the Jungle*, Mark Spitz's "The Hobo Got Me High," and the first theatrical Ed Wood festival. $8.88–$14.99. Call for schedule. Through 10/9. *Nada Classic, 167 Ludlow (800-965-4827).*

The Personal Equation—To kick off the third year of the Playwrights Theater of New York Eugene O'Neill series, which aims to stage all of O'Neill's works, the theater presents his 1915 drama, written while the playwright was a college student. Free. Mon.–Sat. at 8. *Provincetown Playhouse, 133 MacDougal St. (212-998-5801).*

Propaganda Plays—Micah Shraft's play spans 25 years to link an unlinkely bunch: a high-school teacher and his student; a stepson and his new stepmother; and a genetics genius and a journalist. $12–$15. Thurs.–Sat. at 8. Through 9/23. *Dixon Place at Vineyard 26, 309 E. 26th St. (212-532-1546).*

Shattered Boxes—Compagnie Faim de Siècle presents a multimedia *Medea*. $20. 9/13 at 8, 9/14–9/16 and 9/20–9/23 at 10. *The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. (212-255-5793).*

Wyoming—Marylouise Burke stars with Rosalyn Coleman and Camilla Enders in Catherine Gillet's new play about thee women who escape from a mental institution and go gonzo through the great state of Wyoming. $12. Thurs.–Sun. at 8. *78th Street Theatre Lab, 236 W. 78th St. (212-873-9050).*

Opening

Multi-*Medea*

For Compagnie Faim de Siècle's 'Shattered Boxes,' Paris-based director Ibrahim Quraishi ropes a transatlantic crew of accomplished multimedia artists to reinterpret the Greek legends of Medea and Jason. They'll convert the Kitchen into an open space filled with four interactive installations, featuring live video mixes, kawali song, drum 'n' bass, and more traditional elements of theater and dance. Sound like your worst performance-art nightmare? It most assuredly will not be. In addition to a diverse slate of performers from Europe and elsewhere, the project highlights three of the most innovative multimedia auteurs working in New York: Soundlab, Fakeshop's Prema Murthy, and Panoptic's Zak Shuman. Performances begin September 13. (See "Off-Off Broadway.")

Photograph by Ron Kiley.

art

William De Lottie...Jonathan Callan

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Niki de Saint Phalle—Early prints made between 1969 and 1970 by the artist known for her disturbing sexual images and her colorfully painted voluptuous female figures called "Nanas"; 9/7–10/14. Rickards, 1045 Madison Ave. (212-924-0858).

Don Gummer/Jennifer Durrant—New sculpture/Paintings; 9/7–30. Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (212-879-6606).

Fred Schulz—Paintings by an artist (1934–1994) known for his satirical images of people on the streets of New York rendered as robots among highly abstracted stores and buildings; through 9/30. McCarron, 1014 Madison Ave. (212-772-1181).

Acharya Vyakul—Works on paper by the Indian artist (1930–2000) whose style was a combination of popular and tantric painting; 9/7–10/7. Markey, 42 E. 76th St. (212-517-9892).

57th Street Area

Will Barnet—A survey of the artist's works on paper from the thirties to the present; 9/9–10/14. De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave. (212-262-5050).

Alan Bray—Paintings that reflect the artist's observations of and experiences in the landscape surrounding his home in Maine; 9/6–10/7. Schmidt-Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. (212-888-1122).

Ian Dawson—Large-scale sculptures created from everyday, mass-produced plastic objects that are transformed and reconfigured by exposure to intense heat; 9/7–10/7. Cohan, 41 W. 57th St. (212-755-7171).

Laurent de Brunhoff—The original watercolors for the new Babar book *Babar and the Succotash Bird;* through 9/30. Ryan, 24 W. 57th St. (212-397-0669).

Daniel Garcia—Recent paintings; 9/7–10/7. Barquet, 41 E. 57th St. (644-9090)

Gregory Gillespie—A memorial exhibition of paintings by this artist (1936–2000) who was known for his psychologically charged portraits and self-portraits, interiors, images of Tibetan mandalas, and street scenes that paid tribute to Expressionism and Surrealism; 9/7–30. Forum, 745 Fifth Ave. (212-355-4545).

Shirley Goldfarb—Abstract, mainly monochromatic paintings from the sixties and seventies when she was living in Paris; through 9/23. Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (212-752-1223).

Laurie Hogin—Allegorical paintings of mutant flora and fauna; through 10/7. Littlejohn Contemporary, 41 E. 57th St. (212-980-2323).

Micha Klein—Photoworks that depict virtual 3-D environments of human models in frozen poses, fantasy architecture, pills, and radiant light; 9/8–10/28. Boone, 745 Fifth Ave. (212-752-2929).

Joel Corcos Levy—Recent paintings of the Hudson River near Athens, N.Y., and of the east end of Long Island; 9/7–30. David Findlay Jr., 41 E. 57th St. (212-486-7660).

Harvey Quaytman—Abstract paintings on square and shaped canvases and drawings; 9/7–10/7. McKee, 745 Fifth Ave. (212-688-5951).

David Saunders—Paintings and works on paper inspired by the artist's fresh look at French modern masters during a residency at the Cité Internationale des Artes in Paris; 9/7–30. Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. (212-759-2345).

Charmion von Wiegand/Blanche Lazzell—Abstract paintings, collages, and works on paper dating from 1945 to 1969 by the American modernist (1898–1983), who drew inspiration from Eastern philosophies and alternative religions/Paintings, drawings, and original woodblocks by an American modernist (1878–1956) who was a leading exponent of the woodblock print; 9/7–10/28. Rosenfeld, 24 W. 57th St. (212-247-0082).

John Winship/Monica Rich Kosann—Paintings based on the artist's old family photographs dating from the twenties through the forties/Black-and-white photographs of children; 9/6–30. Perlow, 41 E. 57th St. (212-644-7171).

Krzysztof Wodiczko—A video projection of interviews with Hiroshima survivors and their children that was initially projected in Hiroshima (in 1999)

Happening

Westward Ho

The SoHo art scene may not be completely obliterated—yet—but the inexorable march of galleries to West Chelsea is *continuing full-speed this fall. Six SoHo contemporary-art veterans* are bunking together: Friedrich Petzel Gallery, Fredericke Taylor Gallery, Marianne Boesky, CRG Gallery, Julie Saul Gallery, Yancey Richardson Gallery, plus Chelsea's Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects (late of the Starrett-Lehigh building) have all taken spaces in the area's latest gallery behemoth, 535 West 22nd Street, *situated across the street from the new* Sonnabend Gallery *and* owned by the Dia Center for the Arts. Howard Scott Gallery—the mainstay of abstraction formerly known as M-13, on Greene Street—has relocated to 529 West 20th Street. Chelsea has also had an unexpected (though smaller) effect on that other gallery center, 57th Street: Tatistcheff Gallery, a stalwart of representational painting with an allegorical bent, and ACA Galleries, an American art specialist since 1932, have also moved to 529 West 20th Street (a more Chelsea-like 57th Streeter, Mary Boone, is opening a space at 541 West 24th Street in November, with new works by Eric Fischl). There's a start-up to watch in Chelsea, too, engineered by Chelsea "old-timers" Leslie Cohan, 31, and Andrew Leslie, 29, the former directors of Matthew Marks Gallery (below). Cohan, Leslie, and Browne (Martin Browne, a partner, owns Martin Browne Fine Arts in Sydney) will open on October 12 in a 3,800-square-foot former stable at 138 Tenth Avenue, with an inaugural show by conceptual artist and Whitney *Biennial* favorite Joseph Grigely. *"We're on the roadway that links the galleries in the* meatpacking district with the galleries in Chelsea," says Cohan. "And Dunkin' Donuts is moving across the street—what more could you ask for?"

EDITH NEWHALL

beneath the A-Bomb Dome, the building that was directly under the bomb that exploded on August 6, 1945; 9/7–10/21. Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (212-315-0470).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Vanessa Beecroft—Photographs of the artist's staged performances from the series VB39 and VB42; through 9/16. Deitch, 18 Wooster St. (212-343-7300).

Nicola Costantino—An installation in the gallery's storefront space titled *Human Furrier* that suggests a boutique of clothing and accessories but whose products are actually made from synthetic human skin, and a frieze in the main gallery that suggests a battle scene from the pediment of Greek temple but is composed of casts of the fetuses of colts and calves; 9/7–10/7. Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. (212-343-7300).

Linda Daniels/Tamara Gonzales—Paintings of decorative forms arranged over grid compositions/Paintings and installations that use the rainbow as a central image. Through 9/9. Pelavin, 13 Jay St. (212-925-9424).

Anh Duong—New paintings; through 9/16. Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. (212-274-9300).

Marcel Dzama/Jockum Nordström—Figurative pen and watercolor drawings in which figures are stripped of all extenuating circumstances/Graphite drawings that depict strangely familiar characters posing in unlikely situations; 9/8–10/7. Zwirner, 43 Greene St. (212-966-9074).

Hughie Lee-Smith—A memorial exhibition of figurative paintings dating from 1949 to 1999 by this painter who died last year; 9/6–10/3. Kelly, 591 Broadway (212-226-1660).

Manuel Neri—New sculptures in marble and bronze and drawings; through 10/21. Cowles, 74 Grand St. (212-925-3500).

Børre Saethre—*Module for Mood,* an installation of spatial environments that reference waiting areas, decadent private lounges, and other spaces that encourage voyeurism; 9/9–10/12. Thread Waxing Space, 476 Broadway (212-966-9520).

Jeffrey Saldinger—Painted portraits and self-portraits that also depict portions of objects; 9/7–10/7. CRG, 93 Grand St. (212-966-4360).

Do-Ho Suh—A site-specific installation that comprises a "welcome mat" of hundreds of tiny figures and a glass floor supported by more than 180,000 small, tightly packed plastic figures; 9/7–10/7. Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. (212-965-0753).

Uri Tzaig—Recent videos, sculptures, installations, graphic design, artist's books, and a game titled Trance, by an Israeli artist living in Tel Aviv; 9/9–10/28. Artists Space, 38 Greene St. (212-226-3970).

Corban Walker—A site-specific installation made from glass and informed by specific proportions and numbers associated with the human body and the landscape; 9/8–10/7. PaceWildenstein, 142 Greene St. (212-431-9224).

Chelsea

Matthew Benedict—Figurines inspired by the Tarot, and a large-scale painting; 9/9–10/14. Alexander and Bonin, 132 Tenth Ave. (212-367-7474).

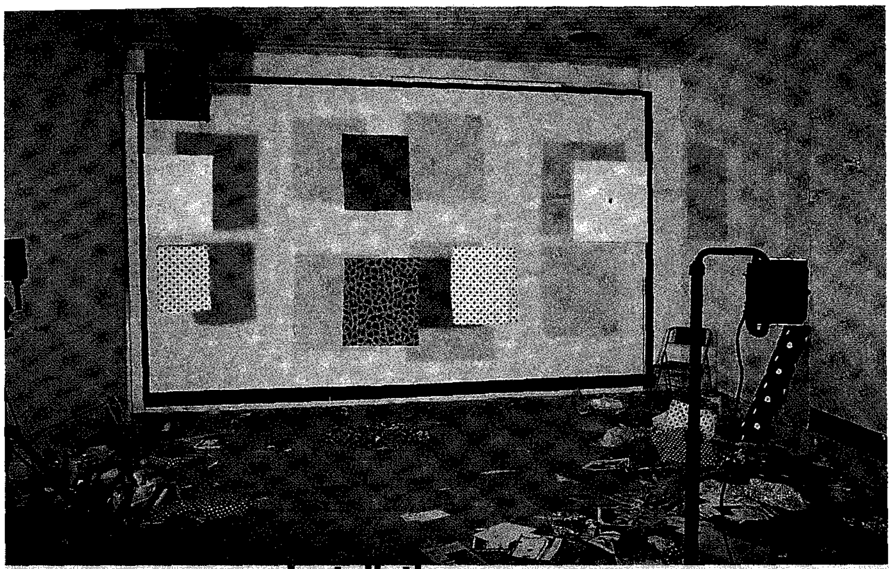
Rachel Berwick—Translucent cast-resin models of the extinct Tasmanian tiger based on film footage of the animal from the twenties; 9/9–10/14. Sikkema, 530 W. 22nd St. (212-929-2262).

Tom Burckhardt/Frank Gonzalez—Paintings that mix abstraction, decorative patterns, and landscape/"The After Life," An installation of floor-to-ceiling shelves of obsolete machinery and goods collected by the artist; 9/8–10/14. Golden, 526 W. 26th St. (212-727-8304).

Jonathan Callan—Books, photographs, small sculptures, and a "dust cement" installation; 9/8–10/14. Klagsbrun, 526 W. 26th St. (212-243-3335).

William De Lottie—Geometric compositions of intensely colored fabric; through 10/7. Eller, 526-30 W. 25th St. (212-206-6411).

Rob de Mar—Freestanding biospheres and wall sculptures that suggest miniature worlds; 9/7–10/7. Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. (212-243-5937).



Installation
Color Theory

Conventions of painting, sculpture, photography, and film collide—with fascinating results—in William De Lottie's installations of pieces of fabric supported by aluminum rods projecting from walls painted by the artist. But that's only the beginning: Even the halogen lamps (whose 500-watt bulbs really make the colors pop) are part of the show. At Derek Eller Gallery, 526–30 West 25th Street; through October 7.

Barry Goldberg—Large-scale abstract encaustic paintings of linear geometric shapes on fields of matte color; 9/7–10/7. Scott, 529 W. 20th St. (646-486-7004).

Mark Innerst—Paintings of views of New York City skyscrapers and of the twin Beacon Newburgh bridges in upstate New York that emphasize verticality and horizontality; 9/8–10/7. Kasmin, 293 Tenth Ave. (212-563-4474).

Kcho—New large-scale drawings that relate to the Cuban artist's monumental sculptures; 9/9–30. Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. (212-206-9300).

Udomsak Krisanamis—Recent collage paintings; 9/9–10/7. Brown's Enterprise, 436 W. 15th St. (212-627-5258).

Samuel Mockbee—Drawings and models designed by the architect for his firm, Mockbee Coker, based in Jackson, Miss., and Memphis, Tenn., and for Auburn University's Rural Studio in Hale County, Ala., which he founded (with D. K. Ruth) in 1993 as a way to give undergraduate architecture students the opportunity to design and build as a service to the community; 9/9–10/21. Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. (212-633-6999).

John Morris—Drawings of intricate compositions inspired by polyphonic music; through 9/30. D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. (212-352-9460).

Stefanie Nagorka—Sculptures composed of cast-concrete blocks and hexagonal units; 9/7–10/14. Debs, 525 W. 26th St. (212-6643-2070).

Alice Neel—Portraits painted by the artist in the eighties, near the end of her life; 9/8–10/14. Miller, 524 W. 26th St. (212-366-4774).

Pat Passlof—Recent abstract paintings in which rhythmic gestures suggest systems; 9/7–10/7. Harris, 529 W. 20th St. (212-463-9666).

Louis Renzoni—Paintings that use film noir as a source and depict people cloaked in shadow, seen through a window, or caught midway in unknown deeds; 9/7–10/7. Foster, 529 W. 20th St. (212-966-9024).

W. C. Richardson—New abstract paintings; 9/9–10/5. Baumgartner, 418 W. 15th St. (633-2276).

Alan Shields—Multidimensional colored-paper constructions; 9/7–10/14. At Cooper, 521 W. 21st St. (255-1105), and Davies, 23 Commerce St. (212-243-6840).

Charles Spurrier—Recent assemblages that incorporate colored light bulbs, Mylar, mosaics of mirror shards, room-fresheners in the shape of Christmas trees, plastic beads, and other materials; 9/7–10/14. Feigen Contemporary, 535 W. 20th St. (212-929-0500).

Claude Wampler—"Painting, the Movie," a performance/installation; 9/9–10/7. Postmasters, 459 W. 19th St. (212-727-3323).

Leslie Wayne—Paintings on wooden boxes that the artist fills and layers with oil paint, and a large-scale wall painting; 9/7–10/7. Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. (212-645-1701).

Meg Webster—A large floor sculpture composed of sections of fired clay whose shape mimics an eroded river basin, and an environment of pools, fish, and live vegetation; 9/9–10/14. Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. (212-255-1105).

Rachel Whiteread—Eight mixed-media drawings from 1997 that were done as studies for the artist's Water Tower project; 9/9–10/14. Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St. (212-206-9100).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Ganz—25 E. 73rd St. (212-535-1977). Drawings and monotypes by Brown, Crowder, Hede, Hesse, Plimpton, Rockburne; through 9/15.

Hirschl & Adler—21 E. 70th St. (212-535-8810). "New York-Classicism-Now," works that embody the characteristics associated with the art of classical antiquity—among them harmony, clarity, restraint, and universality—by Akutsu, Collins, Croak, Drake, Gilje, Moore, Parrish, others; through 9/15.

57th Street Area

Helman—20 W. 57th St. (212-245-2888). "Small," diminutive works by Brower, Burch, Cliness, Kalka, Kreider, De Mar, Opdyke, Simonds; through 9/23.

Mathes—41 E. 57th St. (212-752-5135). "The Poetic Landscape," images of, or suggesting, serene, summery places, by Avery, De Groot, Diebenkorn, Frankenthaler, Gallace, Katz, O'Keeffe, Porter, Schueler, Sugimoto; through 9/30.

Pace Wildenstein—32 E. 57th St. (212-421-3292). "Summer 2000," paintings by Katz, Mangold, Murray, Riley, Ryman, Samaras, Tapiès; sculpture by Chamberlain, Judd, Shapiro, Smith; through 9/16.

Photograph courtesy of the Derek Eller Gallery.

Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Tues. through Sat., from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

PaineWebber—1285 Sixth Ave. (212-713-2000). "The Morris Museum: A Collected Century." Works from the collection of the Morris Museum in Morristown, N.J., among them fine and decorative arts, costumes, toys, and ethnographic objects; through 9/8.

St. Etienne—24 W. 57th St. (212-245-6734). Recent acquisitions of works by Expressionist and self-taught artists; through 9/8.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Blum—99 Wooster St. (212-343-0441). "Lux et Tenebrae," a selection of print portfolios published by Peter Blum Edition over the past twenty years, including works by Baldessari, Bourgeois, Cucchi, Fischl, Katz, Rabinowitch, Turrell, Yanagi, others; through 9/9.

Exit Art—548 Broadway (212-966-7745). "Paradise Now: Picturing the Genetic Revolution," works by 39 artists who are exploring the ways in which breakthroughs in genetic research are changing life as we know it; 9/9–10/28.

Fung—537 Broadway (212-334-6242). "Pix," works by Blue, Braine, Churchill, Dikeou, Feldshuh, Kong, Proctor, Surek, Welsh, others; through 9/23.

Ingbar—568 Broadway (212-334-1100). Paintings of New York City views by Kelsey, Reist, Sera, Sokolov; through 9/23.

Kind—136 Greene St. (212-925-1200). "Furry and Feathered Friends," works depicting animals by Copley, Finster, Podhorsky, Ramirez, Rowe, Tolliver, others; through 9/9.

Location One—26 Greene St. (212-334-3347). "LIFE, After the Squirrel," installations by Cardiff, Cooley, Rist, Tasset, and others in environments created by the exhibition's curator, Harm Lux; 9/9–10/28.

Chelsea

P.P.O.W.—476 Broome St. (212-941-8642). "Nude + Narrative," works by twelve artists who use the nude to explore the tension between a formal artistic style and critical social awareness, including Attie, Bartlett, Heffernan, Kuharic, Woodruff, others; 9/7–10/7.

Senior & Shopmaker—21 E. 26th St. (212-213-6767). Works by Armajani, Calle, Lobe, Mapplethorpe, Marsh, Maul, Phelan, Smith, Welling; through 9/15.

Tibet House Cultural Center—22 W. 15th St. (212-807-0563). "Art Treasures From the Land of Snows: Selections From the Tibet House Repatriation Collection," gilt bronzes, *thangkas* (paintings), ritual objects, and photographs; through 9/22.

Trans Hudson—416 W. 13th St. (212-242-3232). "Fabulae . . . Fabularum," works that evoke fairy tales, by Bolla, Boody, Frank, Ippolito, Pinna, Van Erve, others; through 10/7.

White Box—525 W. 26th St. (212-714-2347). "Critic as Grist," artworks about art critics by Bag, Beckley, Kaplowitz, Levine, Oppenheim, Pruitt, Rosler, Wampler, others; 9/7–10/17.

Photography

De Lellis—47 E. 68th St. (212-327-1482). Images of the sea by Italian photographers, including works by Bernardi, Bruno, Gucci, Migliori, Stravisi, Vasco, Vitaliano, others; through 9/9.

Robert Frank—Photographs and books from the forties through the nineties documenting his travels in Peru, Switzerland, France, Spain, England, and the United States, plus enlarged filmstrips from his early film *Pull My Daisy*; 9/7–10/21. Scalo, 560 Broadway (212-334-9393).

Jenny Gage—Photographs that capture the life of the "fast girl" in a small California town; 9/9–10/14. Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St. (212-206-9100).

Katy Grannan—Large color portraits of adolescents, young mothers and children, and couples taken in their own homes; through 9/30. Rubin, Greenberg Van Doren, 730 Fifth Ave. (212-445-0444).

Teresa Hubbard and Alexander Bircher—Collaborative color photographs that introduce the viewer to a fictional world of constructed sets and anonymous, solitary characters; 9/9–10/14. Bonakdar Jancou, 521 W. 21st St. (212-414-4144).

ICP—1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (212-860-1777), Tues.–Thurs. 10–5, Fri. 10–8 (voluntary contribution 5–8), Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $6, $4 students and seniors. "Martha Rosler: Positions in the Life World." A retrospective of works by the videomaker, theorist, photographer, and political activist, being held in conjunction with a related exhibition at the New Museum of Contemporary Art (see "Museums"); through 10/1. . . . "A Durable Memento: Portraits by Augustus Washington, African-American Daguerreotypist." The first exhibition of the work of one of a small group of African-American daguerreotypists whose work has been identified; through 9/24.

Michael Kenna—Photographs of nocturnal landscapes and cityscapes; 9/7–10/21. Mann, 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-989-7600).

Mexican Cultural Institute—27 E. 39th St. (212-217-6423), Mon.–Fri. 10-5. "Otras Cosas: Mexican Modern Abstractions," an exhibition presented by Throckmorton Fine Art of works by L. Alvarez Bravo, M. Alavarez Bravo, Amero, Covarrubias, Jiménez; through 10/10.

Joel Meyerowitz—Color photographs of street scenes in Paris and New York taken between 1966 and 1976 that have never been published or exhibited; 9/8–10/21. Meyerowitz, 580 Broadway (212-625-3434).

Richard Misrach—New images of the sky that continue the photographer's study of light and color; 9/8–10/14. Marcus, 578 Broadway (212-226-3200).

Julie Moos—A project titled "Friends and Enemies" in which the photographer divided students of a high-school class into pairs and took their portraits; Fredericks Freiser, 504 W. 22nd St. (633-6555).

Newseum—580 Madison Ave. (212-317-7596). "The Pulitzer Prize Photographs: Capture the Moment," *featuring more than 100 Pulitzer Prize–winning photographs taken between 1941 and 1999; through 9/23.*

Robert Polidori—Color photographs of interiors of grand or once-grand buildings in Cuba, Brazil, France, Lebanon, and the United States; 9/7–10/14. Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (212-759-7999).

Steve Shapiro—Photographs from the sixties covering political campaigns, the civil-rights movement, hippie protests, and the New York art scene; 9/7–10/14. Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St. (212-517-3766).

Wilhelm von Gloeden—Photographs of Italian boys posed alongside ruins and dressed in togas, by the German photographer (1856–1931), who lived and worked in Taormina, Sicily; 9/8–10/8. Wessel + O'Connor, 242 W. 26th St. (212-242-8811).

Harvey Wang—Photographs from the new book *Flophouse: Life on the Bowery* (Random House) that depict residents from the White House, the Andrews, the Sunshine, and the Providence, four of the remaining flophouses in the Bowery district; through 9/24. Bodell, 13 E. 7th St. (212-477-1820).

James Welling—Four series of photographs, among them "Degrades," color photograms made with shaded light, and "Eastern Window," images that record the changing view from the artist's window; 9/8–10/7. Gorney Bravin + Lee, 534 W. 26th St. (212-352-8872).

Frank Yamrus—Portraits of people in sexual rapture; 9/9–10/14. Morthland, 225 Tenth Ave. (212-242-7767).

Museums

American Craft Museum—"Memories of Murano: American Glass Artists in Venice." Glass works made in Venice by Tina Marie Aufiero, James Carpenter, Dale Chihuly, Dan Dailey, William Prindle, Ginny Ruffner, Toots Zynsky, and other American glass artists who have been invited to work in the Venetian glass factory of Paolo Venini; 9/13–1/7/01. . . . "Venetian Glass: 20th Century Italian Glass From the Olnick Spanu Collection." Works by Flavio Poli, Carlos Scarpa, Thomas Stearns, Paolo Venini, and other glass artists from the collection of Nancy Olnick and Giorgio Spanu; 9/13–1/7/01. 40 W. 53rd St. (212-956-3535), Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., and Sun. 10–6, Thurs. 10–8 (pay what you wish 6–8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History—"Fighting Dinosaurs." Fossils of dinosaurs locked in combat that were recently discovered in the Gobi Desert; through 10/29. Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Asia Society at Midtown—"Dancing Demons: Ceremonial Masks of Mongolia." Masks, costumes, headdresses, ritual aprons, and ceremonial implements used for "Devil Dances," the traditional Lamaist Buddhist dance ceremonies of Mongolia; through 9/17. 502 Park Ave., at 59th St. (212-288-6400), Tues.–Sat. 10–6; Sun. noon-6. $4, $2 students and seniors (free Tues.–Fri. 12–2).

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"African Masterworks From the Collection of Beatrice Riese." African art collected by the painter Beatrice Riese, who has lived in New York since 1949; through 9/10. . . . "Passages: Photographs in Africa by Carol Beckwith and Angela Fisher." Color photographs documenting customs, rites of passage, and aspects of ceremonial life; through 9/24. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. 11–6 (till 11 P.M. on the first Saturday of every month), Sun. 11–6; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution—"The Opulent Eye of Alexander Girard." A retrospective of works by the mid-century American designer and architect (1907–1993); 8/12–3/18. 2 E. 91st St. (212-849-8300), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 12–5, Tues. 10–9 (5–9, free *admission); $8, $3 students and seniors.*

Dahesh Museum of Art—"A Distant Muse: Orientalist *Works From the Dahesh Museum of Art." Paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings, photographs, books, and decorative arts* by Jean-Léon Gérôme, Charles-Théodore Frère, Ernst Koerner, and other European Orientalists; through 12/30. 601 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (212-759-0606), Tues.–Sat. 11–6; free.

Drawing Center—"Selections Fall 2000." Works on paper by eight emerging artists who submitted their work to the Drawing Center's curatorial staff for professional feedback and to be considered for inclusion in an exhibition; 9/9–10/7. . . . "Ania Soliman, *Biohazards*." An installation of four large-scale drawings that reflect on media's representation of epidemics; 9/9–10/7. 35 Wooster St. (212-219-2166), Tues.–Fri. 10–6, Sat. 11–6; donation suggested.

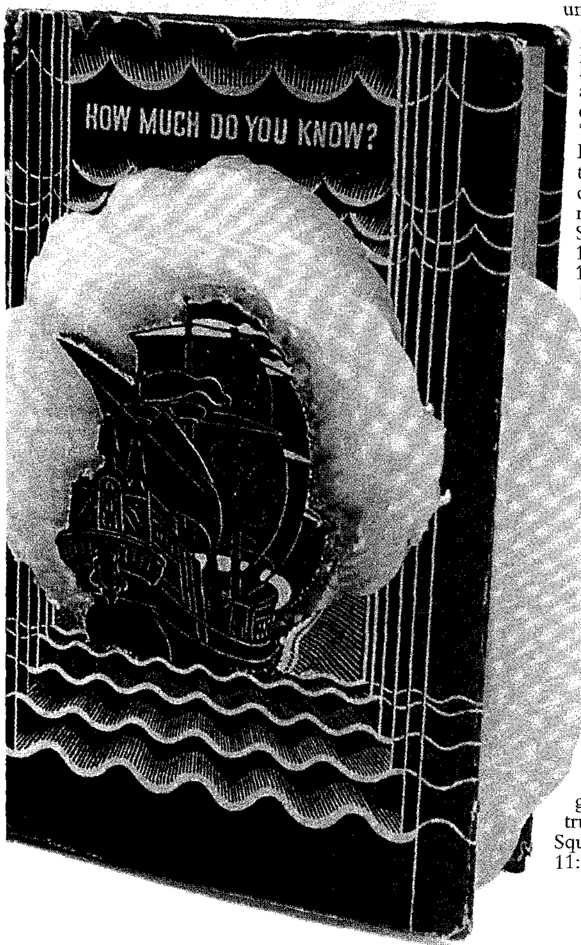
Frick Collection—"A Brush With Nature: The Gere Collection of Landscape Oil Sketches." Scenic views of Italy painted by British, French, Italian, German, Belgian, and Scandinavian artists, collected by the art historians Charlotte and John Gere; 9/12–11/12. . . . "Mantegna's *Descent Into Limbo*, From the Barbara Piasecka Johnson Collection." A smaller version of Mantegna's original masterpiece that was probably painted by the artist for Ferdinand Carlo, the last Duke of Mantua, around 1470–75; through 8/1/03. . . . "Six Paintings From the Former Collection of Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney on Loan From the Greentree Foundation." Works by Corot, Degas, Manet, Picasso, Redon; through 7/29/01. 1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $7, $5 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum—"Amazons of the Avant-Garde: Alexandra Exter, Natalia Goncharova, Liubov Popova, Olga Rozanova, Varvara Stepanova, and Nadezhda Udaltsova." Paintings and works on paper by six Russian avant-garde women artists, drawn from more than 30 public and private collections; through 1/7. . . . "1900: Art at the Crossroads." An exhibition organized in collaboration with the Royal Academy of

Arts, London, offering a radical reassessment of artistic cross-currents at the turn of the century, featuring works by Balla, Bouguereau, Degas, Eakins, Kandinsky, Matisse, Mondrian, Picasso, and others; through 9/10. . . . "Project for a New Guggenheim in New York City." Models and other works developed by the museum in collaboration with architect Frank Gehry; through 9/15. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (212-423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 9–6, Fri. and Sat. 9–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $12, $8 students and seniors.

Jewish Museum—"Eat, Drink, and Be Merry: Wine and Beer in Ancient Times." The history of the two beverages as told through art, artifacts, and paraphernalia from the wine- and grain-producing regions of the Mediterranean and the Near East; through 11/5. . . . "Moritz Daniel Oppenheim: Scenes From Frankfurt's Jewish Past." Fourteen *grisaille* (monochromes in shades of gray) paintings by the German Jewish artist (1800–1882), from his series "Pictures of Traditional Jewish Family Life"; through 10/19. . . . "Pickles and Pomegranates: Jewish Homes Near and Far." An interactive children's exhibit that evokes life in two late-nineteenth-century Jewish households; through 10/30. 1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (212-423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5 pay what you wish); $8, $5.50 students and seniors.

Talent It's back-to-school time again, so pump up your books with silicone injections! British artist Jonathan Callan does, and the resulting tomes might not pass muster in English class: They look like they've been attacked by a hideous fungus (below, *How Much Do You Know,* 2000). Callan is also showing a "dustscape"—white cement powder that's been sifted through a template to form a Persian rug–ish pattern on the floor. At Nicole Klagsbrun, 526 West 26th Street; September 8 through October 14.



Metropolitan Museum of Art—"American Modern: 1925–1940—Design for a New Age." More than 100 objects from the museum's collection and from the John C. Waddell Collection, including furniture, clocks, appliances, lamps, posters, and textiles; through 1/9/01. . . . "Painters in Paris: 1895–1950." Paintings by Bonnard, Braque, Chagall, Léger, Matisse, Picasso, and other artists who worked in Paris; through 12/31. . . . "The Beginning of Baroque: Carracci at the Metropolitan." Paintings, prints, and drawings made between 1580 and 1610 by Annibale, Agostino, and Ludovico Carracci from the museum's collection; through 9/17. . . . "Max Beckmann Prints." A selection of recent acquisitions of early drypoints created by the German artist between 1914 and 1922; through 1/7/01. . . . "Parks and Promenades: Maurice Prendergast in the Metropolitan Museum of Art." Paintings, watercolors, and prints by the New England modernist (1858–1924); through 10/22. . . . "David Smith on the Roof." A selection of stainless-steel sculptures displayed in the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Roof Garden; through 11/30. . . . "Fireworks!: Four Centuries of Pyrotechnics in Prints and Drawings"; through 9/17. . . . "John Singer Sargent: Beyond the Portrait Studio, Paintings and Drawings From the Collection." Works made by the artist during his travels in Europe and America; through 9/10. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $10 contribution, $5 students and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (212-923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $10, $5 students and seniors.

Morgan Library—"Claude and the Ideal Landscape." Drawings of Italian landscapes by the French artist Claude Lorrain (1600–1682), who spent most of his life in Rome; through 10/29. . . . "Treasures From the Royal Tombs of Ur." An exhibition organized by the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archeology and Anthropology comprising jewelry, musical instruments, tools, weapons, cylinder seals, human remains, and other objects and artifacts from the ancient Sumerian city-state of Ur; through 9/10. . . . "Sacred Songs: Illuminated Choir Books." Music manuscripts used in the liturgy of the Catholic church during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; through 10/15. 29 E. 36th St. (212-685-0008), Tues.–Thurs. 10:30–5, Fri. 10–8, Sat. 10:30–6, Sun. 12–6; $8, $6 students and seniors.

El Museo del Barrio—"The S-Files/The Selected Files." Works by U.S.-born Latinos and New York City–based Latin American artists who submitted work to the museum for review over the past year; through 9/24. . . . "Ernesto Pujol: Conversion of Manners." A site-specific installation that incorporates photographs and vintage Carthusian, Franciscan, and Jesuit habits; through 9/24. 1230 Fifth Ave. (212-831-7272), Wed.–Sun. 11–5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Museum of American Folk Art—"An Engagement With Folk Art, Cyril I. Nelson's Gifts to the Museum." Quilts, textiles, coverlets, painted and decorated furniture, paintings, and other works given to the museum by one of its trustees; through 1/7/01. Two Lincoln Square (212-595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Modern Art—"Making Choices," the second cycle of MOMA2000 exhibitions: "The Marriage of Reason and Squalor." A survey examining opposites as they occur in single works of art; through 9/19. . . . "The Raw and the Cooked." Works by unschooled, outsider, and naïve artists; through 9/19. . . . "Useless Science"; through 9/19. . . . "Anatomically Incorrect"; through 9/26. . . . "Home Movies"; through 9/26. . . . "How Simple Can You Get?"; through 9/26. . . . "Ideal Motif: Stieglitz, Weston, Adams, and Callahan"; through 9/26. . . . "Modern Living 2"; through 9/26. . . . "New York Salon." A cross-section of painting and sculpture that marked the beginning of the New York School's rise to prominence; through 9/26. . . . "The Observer: Cartier-Bresson After the War"; through 9/26. . . . "Paris Salon"; through 9/26. . . . "The Rhetoric of Persuasion"; through 9/26. . . . "Seeing Double." An exploration of the theme of pseudoscience through artworks that mimicked scientific methods, and of the absurd as a philosophical, literary, and artistic concept; through 9/26. . . . "Project 70: Jim Hodges, Beatriz Milhazes, Faith Ringgold." Banners by each artist displayed on the museum's 53rd Street façade; through 10/31. . . . "Collection Highlights." More than 45 masterworks from the museum's permanent collection of painting and sculpture; through 1/28/01. 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); Sat.–Tues., Thurs. 10:30–5:45, Fri. 10:30–8:15 (4:30–8:15 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $10, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York—"Renewing a Block and the Spirit of its People: Photographs of Carmel Hill, Harlem, by Bill Foley; through 11/12. . . . "Under the El." Images of New York City life in prints, watercolors, and drawings from the museum's collection; through 12/3. . . . "New York Now: Contemporary Works in Photography." Images of New York and New Yorkers from the museum's collection; through 10/15. . . . "Elegant Plate: Three Centuries of Precious Metals in New York City." Objects of silver, gold, and other metals from the museum's collection that were used in or near New York from the early eighteenth century through the twentieth century; through 9/24. . . . "New York: Songs of the City." More than 50 pieces of lavishly illustrated sheet music for songs celebrating New York; through 9/10. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; $5 suggested contribution, $4 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology—"Storytelling, From Thumbnail to Finish." Works in a broad range of media by the faculty of the School of Art and Design, each one accompanied by documentation of its progress from idea to realized work; through 9/16. Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (212-217-7642), Tues.–Fri. 12–8, Sat. 10–5; free.

National Academy of Design—"American Spectrum: Paintings and Sculpture From the Smith College Museum of Art." A traveling exhibition drawn from one of the foremost institutional collections of eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century American art, including works by Albers, Homer, Hopper, Inness, Kline, O'Keeffe, Sargent, and others; through 9/10. 1083 Fifth Ave. (212-369-4880), Wed., Thurs., Sat., Sun. 12-5, Fri. 10-6; $5.

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"Martha Rosler: Positions in the Life World." A retrospective of the artist's videos, installations, and photographs; through 10/8. 583 Broadway (212-219-1222), Wed. and Sun. 12–6, Thurs.–Sat. 12–8 (free Thurs. 6–8); $6, $3 artists, students, and seniors.

New-York Historical Society—"Stork Club." An exhibition tracing the history of New York's legendary nightclub through letters and business records, photographs, menus, and accessories bearing the nightclub's logo; through 10/1. 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); Tues.–Sun. 11–5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

New York Public Library—"Drawings by Charles Addams." A rotating selection of drawings by the *New Yorker* cartoonist; through 6/30/01. Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (212-869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues. and Wed. 11–7:30, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center—"Around 1984: A Look at Art in the Eighties." Works by a selected group of

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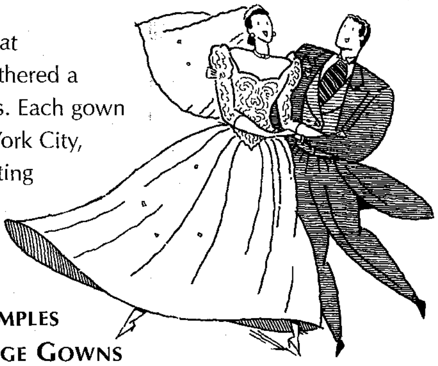

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artists who were practicing in the eighties, among them Basquiat, Bickerton, Clemente, Cragg, Calle, Halley, Holzer, Kapoor, Koons, Salle, Schnabel, Steinbach, Sherman; through 9/30. . . . "Volume: Bed of Sound." Works by approximately 80 sound artists presented through headphones and a room designed with speakers for individual and group sound-art presentation; through 9/30. . . . Projects by Jonathan Bepler, Christian Marclay, Pipilotti Rist, and Ugo Rondinone; through 9/30. . . . "Max Neuhaus: Drawings." Drawings that complement the artist's sound works; through 9/30. 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $5 suggested donation.

Queens Museum of Art—"Art at Work: Forty Years of the Chase Manhattan Collection." More than 120 contemporary artworks from the bank's collection, by Acconci, Barney, Clemente, Close, Gober, Nauman, Prince, Sherman, Wegman, others; through 10/1. New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700), Tues.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 12–5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"From the Studio: Artists-in-Residence 1999–2000." Works by Nicole Awai, Sanford Biggers, and Terry Boddie; through 9/17. . . . "*To Conserve a Legacy* Interactive Kiosk." A digital exhibition featuring images of and information on works in the traveling exhibition "To Conserve a Legacy: American Art From Historically Black Colleges and Universities," which is currently installed at the Clark Atlanta University Art Gallery and the High Museum of Art in Atlanta; through 10/6. 144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500), Wed. and Thurs. 12–6, Fri. 12–8, Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Barbara Kruger." The first major museum retrospective of the artist's work, including billboards, photographic prints on paper and vinyl, etched metal plates, installations, and sculptures that use text and image to raise questions about values, taste, and the material world; through 10/22. . . . "The Art of Alice Neel." A retrospective exhibition of paintings by the American artist (1900–1984) known for her unflinching portraits of her friends, family, neighbors, and fellow artists; through 9/17. . . . "Synapsis Shuffle." A project by Robert Rauschenberg that comprises 52 silk-screened paintings intended to be reassembled into compositions of between three and seven panels by longtime friends or colleagues of the artist; through 10/8. . . . "Tony Oursler: *The Darkest Color Infinitely Amplified*." A new work commissioned by the museum that allows three-dimensional projections to appear in free space; through 10/31. . . . "Carnival Strippers: Photographs by Susan Meiselas." Photographs of women who perform strip tease for a living taken at rural New England fairs in the seventies; through 9/10. . . . "In Depth: Recent Print Acquisitions." Prints by Burgoyne Diller, Donald Judd, Louise Nevelson, and Richard Tuttle; through 11/26. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (212-570-3676); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–9 (pay what you wish every Thurs. 6–9); $10, $8 students, seniors, and groups of fifteen or more.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"Pastoral Pop!" Site-specific commissioned works by Katrin Asbury, Rob de Mar, Rachel Feinstein, Peter Gould, Jason Middelbrook, Lisa Ruyter, and Alyson Shotz; through 12/15. . . . "Expanding Horizons: Landscape Photographs From the Whitney Museum of American Art." Works by Gregory Crewdson, Sally Gall, Sally Mann, Richard Misrach, Stephen Shore, and others; through 10/6. 120 Park Ave. (917-663-2550), Mon.–Fri. 11–6 (Thurs. till 7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's—20 Rockefeller Plaza (212-636-2000). Next auction on 9/14.

Christie's East—219 E. 67th St. (212-606-0430). 9/9 at 2: "Wine."

Sotheby's—1334 York Ave., at 72nd St. (212-606-7000). Next auction on 9/16..

Swann Galleries—104 E. 25th St. (212-254-4710). Next auction on 9/14.

restaurants

Battle of the Beef...New Miss...Rose Water

Restaurant Misters Chow

You wouldn't know it from the façade, which hasn't changed a bit, or the name, which has, negligibly, but the ill-fated West Village corner location occupied by Chow Bar (in earlier, unluckier incarnations, Chow Bar and Grill, Formerly Joe's, and Joe's Again) is finally undergoing a delectable reversal of fortune. The pan-Asian kitchen is now under the control of new chef-partner Peter Klein, who has settled down into permanent residency after spending the past few years living out of a suitcase and opening chichi restaurants in Westport, Aspen, Atlanta, L.A., and New Orleans. Now he's brought his bravura riffs on chow mein (which he calls house chow), addictive honey-plum-glazed spareribs, Sichuan steak frites, and Shanghai lobster noodles with red Thai curry to a tavernesque dining room rendered appropriately Eastern by his partner, Bob Gaines, who also trained the staff and mans the door. (230 West 4th Street; 212-633-2212.)

Manhattan

Lower New York

Bari—Downstairs, this perpetually bustling café attracts SoHo shoppers taking time out for cappuccino, sandwiches, and a view of the always entertaining street scene. Ascend the spiral staircase for a more substantial meal in the loftlike dining room, which features a woodburning oven and grill and dishes like spice-rubbed duck breast with bok choy, crispy roasted halibut, and broiled asparagus with browned Parmesan and bread crumbs. *529 Broadway, at Spring St. (212-431-4350). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Capsouto Frères—Landmark French bistro with talked-about soufflés. Flemish-style building hosts local business folks at lunch. Dinner is a New York mix of neighborhood regulars, tourists, and trekkers from uptown. Dishes to try include the terrine Provençal and the roast duckling with ginger-and-cassis sauce. *451 Washington St. (212-966-4900). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (212-966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Divine Bar—The jewel-toned Financial District branch of the popular Turtle Bay bar and lounge serves the same extensive selection of wine and beer, and a similar menu of appetizer-size plates they call "international tapas." Typically creative selections include a barbecued-buffalo sandwich, shrimp satay with hoisin sauce, and a wild-mushroom quesadilla. *55 Liberty St., second fl. (212-791-WINE). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ecco—Old-world charm, an excellent seasonal antipasto, and classic renditions of such Italian standards as pasta, veal chop, lobster fra diavolo, and osso buco. Very cozy narrow booths line the east wall, and tile floors take you back to the Gilded Age. Live piano music on Friday and Saturday night. *124 Chambers St. (212-227-7074). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Gigino Trattoria—The rustic Italian fare in this barn-like TriBeCa trattoria ranges from brick-oven pizza and calzones to salmon with broccoli rabe. The casual atmosphere and fresh, inventive peasant food attract a loyal neighborhood following. *323 Greenwich St. (212-431-1112). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Greatest Bar on Earth—This, the most casual component of the Windows on the World complex, has become a popular meeting spot for downtown office workers, curious club kids, and the inevitable tourists. The view, obviously, can't be beat, and the snacky menu includes global bites like fried calamari, barbecued ribs, and sushi. Live music Tuesday through Saturday. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Gubbio—Decorated with imported tapestries and pottery meant to evoke a medieval Umbrian hill town, this spacious TriBeCa restaurant features a seasonal Italian menu that strives to avoid culinary clichés. Choices include pork medallions with stewed cabbage and smoked ricotta, and lamb carpaccio with olive pesto. *223 W. Broadway (212-334-8077). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Hudson River Club—From this Frank Lloyd Wright–ish dining room in the World Financial Center, you can see the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. But your attention may very well be diverted by the eye-catching American food—seafood sausage with stewed white beans, potato-and-truffle ravioli with saffron cream, seared yellowfin tuna with caramelized foie gras—right in front of you. *4 World Financial Ctr. (212-786-1500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Montrachet—No matter how many more restaurants the indefatigable Drew Nieporent has up his sleeve, this one's his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. The wine list is killer. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (212-219-2777). (E) AE only.*

Morton's of Chicago—The second New York location of the national steakhouse chain. Portions are huge, quality is consistent, and, in case you haven't noticed, beef is back. *90 West St. (212-732-5665). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Nobu—The great Nobu Matsuhisa—actually, he's young, good-looking, and incredibly hip—has conquered TriBeCa. It's still virtually impossible to get a reservation, but the intrepid hordes can wait for a table to open up two doors down at Next Door Nobu. *105 Hudson St. (212-219-0500). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *109 Spring St. (212-274-8883). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Raoul's—The dull roar in this cavelike bistro—aging gracefully amid the high-strung Thoroughbreds of SoHo's restaurant racetrack—is a heartwarming sound. *180 Prince St., nr. Thompson St. (212-966-3518). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Scalini Fedeli—This Manhattan branch of a spectacularly popular and critically acclaimed Italian restaurant in New Jersey occupies the old Bouley space, distinguished by high ceiling arches, antiques, and fresh floral arrangements. Dishes like slow-roasted salmon with chanterelles and pan-seared duck breast and leg confit with Calvados and braised figs, both available on the $60 prix fixe, are equally elegant. *165 Duane St. (212-528-0400). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Sosa Borella—This full-service TriBeCa café is just as good for an afternoon espresso as for a full meal, not to mention the weekly tango lessons. Sandwiches come nearly two dozen ways; the Italian-Argentinean menu features entrées like Milanese steak and short ribs of beef. *460 Greenwich St. (212-431-5093). (I–M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Spring Street Natural—Before SoHo was *SoHo*—and aeons before anyone even conceived of NoLIta—this health-food hub was turning out mostly organic, life-sustaining fare, very similar to its present menu of grilled fresh fish, free-range poultry, and soy every which way. As befits a natural-food haven, there's lots of greenery, big windows, high ceilings, and a generally wholesome vibe. Plus delivery, and such intriguing daily specials as yuca

Photograph by Carina Salvi.

fritters with jalapeño-tomato relish, roasted salmon with creamy vegetable risotto, and scrambled tofu with brown rice. *62 Spring St. (212-966-0290). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Wild Blue—In an intimate room that's warm and plushly comfortable but doesn't try to compete with the famous view, chef Michael Lomonaco's menu is solid, superlative American, with a touch of the steakhouse. Exceedingly moist chicken gets a Med-rim treatment with olives and preserved lemons, and buttermilk fried oysters with chipotle cream and spoon bread are an inspired take on an American classic. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7107). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Windows on the World—Chef and TV personality Michael Lomonaco supervises the kitchens of this landmark restaurant known for what may be the most spectacular view of Manhattan Island. His menu focuses on sophisticated renditions of American food, including stout-braised Black Angus short ribs with Maytag blue cheese, and lobster potpie with truffle cream, spinach leaves, and a chive biscuit. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's 60,000-bottle wine cellar. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, East

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (212-620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (212-645-4525). Also, 1662 Third Ave., at 93rd St. (426-5422). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

RBG—During the day, this East Village chameleon satisfies the local appetite for coffee-shop fare with burgers, sandwiches, and salads. At night, happy hour kicks off a mellower mood: the lights go down, the D.J. starts spinning, and the menu extends to more elaborate dishes like apricot-walnut-stuffed pork chop and cilantro-lime chicken breast with roasted-corn salsa. *37 Third Ave. (212-777-2216). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Telephone Bar & Grill—This East Village fixture was serving classic pub grub like shepherd's pie and fish and chips long before anyone thought of British comfort food as trendy. A youngish crowd gathers here for happy hour (Mondays through Fridays, 4 to 7p.m.) and for a typically hearty Irish breakfast on weekends. *149 Second Ave. (212-529-5000). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Gus' Place—This welcoming Greek taverna in the West Village offers authentic Mediterranean meze and entrées; French doors open out onto warm evenings. The orzo with Gulf shrimp and the lamb-shank stifado are house specialties. *149 Waverly Pl. (212-645-8511). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Jekyll & Hyde—Can you guess the theme of this boisterous Village restaurant? Billing itself as a "haunted explorers' club," it offers interactive entertainment, special effects, and—so that famished explorers may keep up their strength—a menu of American fare like grilled tuna steak, pumpkin tortelli in sun-dried-tomato cream sauce, and "voodoo-spiced" Cajun steak. *91 Seventh Ave. S. (212-989-7701). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Osteria Fiorentina—Live piano and violin music lend this casual Italian restaurant that old-time Village ambience. The menu offers standards like risotti, open ravioli, zuppa di clams, and veal chops. *281 Bleecker St. (212-633-2941). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Villa Mosconi—Peter Mosconi and his brood offer a menu as reliable as traditional Northern Italian home cooking. Find this old-world anachronism in the heart of Greenwich Village. A year-round backyard garden is available for private parties. *69 Macdougal St. (212-673-0390). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Alva—Bare lightbulbs evoke Thomas Edison, the namesake of this sleek spot owned by Aureole chef Charlie Palmer, but Josh Capon's food is all very twentieth-century: potato-wrapped cod with citrus glaze, charred sirloin with red-onion marmalade, foie gras parfait with roasted apple chutney. *36 E. 22nd St. (212-228-4399). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bambou—There's a hint of the tropics on East 14th Street: ambitiously nouvelle renderings of Caribbean cuisine, like crab cakes with avocado and molasses or eggplant soup with coconut and curry. The relaxing, palm-fronded dining room and bar attract the expected boldface names and beautiful faces. *243 E. 14th St. (212-358-0012). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Bolo—There's nothing discreet about Bobby Flay's neo-Spanish cooking. In a room that reminds you of Gaudí by way of Pee-wee Herman, Flay turns out fiery, bold dishes like oven-roasted mushrooms with goat cheese and chili oil as well as paella with curried shellfish and chicken. *23 E. 22nd St. (212-228-2200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Commodore Grill at the Grand Hyatt Hotel—Commuters and business travelers will be glad to know they can enter this formal hotel restaurant directly from Grand Central Terminal, whether for a quick drink in the cigar bar or a full meal of such French-influenced American fare as foie gras French toast, tuna tartare, and ribeye of veal with Swiss chard. *42nd St. and Lexington Ave. (212-850-5999). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Meli Melo—A pioneer of the lower-Madison restaurant scene, this cheerful neighborhood spot offers a very reasonable fixed-price dinner—$31.50 for four courses, all night (including Sunday). The seafood-heavy French menu has Asian and Mediterranean touches in dishes like seared tuna with baby bok choy, rack of lamb with couscous, and a Vietnamese fish soup. And there's a private party room and ample parking. *110 Madison Ave., nr. 29th St. (212-686-5551). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions. He developed his own signature style, plundering the ingredients of the American Southwest for such mouthwatering creations as roasted-garlic shrimp tamales and ancho-honey-glazed salmon. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun, especially for those partaking of the house drink, a cactus-pear margarita. *102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (212-807-7400). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

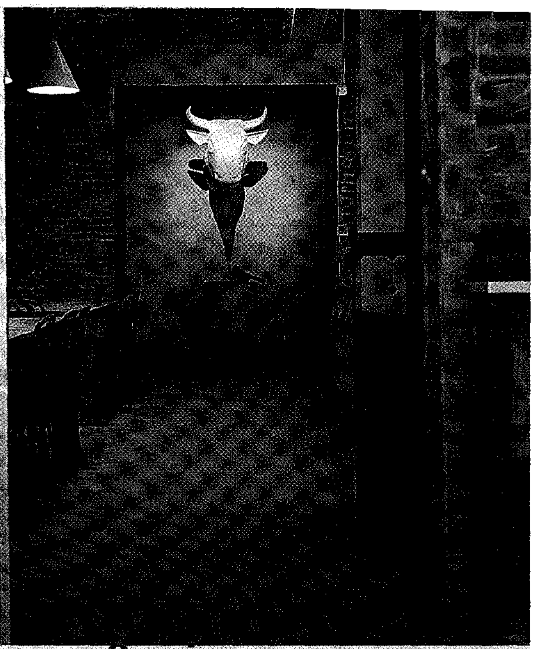
Metro Fish—Hearty fish dinners with all the fixin's in a "nautical townhouse" setting. Live lobsters, crabs, and other fresh seafood platters are simple, satisfying, and reminiscent of the sort of shore dinners served in seaside towns along the Northeast coast. Those with more of a culinary wanderlust can sample the house-special bouillabaisse. *8 E. 36th St. (212-683-6444). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Metronome—This 10,000-square-foot Flatiron space is especially well suited to private functions, but even the lone diner (or foursome) will find the Deco design welcoming and the food—riffs on a Mediterranean theme like "pinchos" of vegetables with goat cheese, and za'atar-crusted rack of lamb, prosciutto, and Brie over herb risotto—satisfying. Live jazz performed Wednesday through Saturday. *915 Broadway, at 21st St. (212-505-7400). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Mi—A talented team of cooks with impressive-sounding résumés (Mercer Kitchen, Hatsuhana) collaborate on a menu including sushi and sashimi, pad Thai, Malaysian spare ribs, and Korean bibimbob at this four-flavor pan-Asian restaurant. *66 Madison Ave., nr. 27th St. (212-252-8888). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Novitá—A beautiful Flatiron restaurant with upscale, nouvelle Italian. Try, especially, the handmade pastas, which seem to have only beneficial effects on all the fashion types and Elite models who've made this room their home away from home. *102 E. 22nd St. (212-677-2222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Patria—Zesty Latin American fare brought to you in a festive high-energy atmosphere. The three-story dining room suits the changing mood of diners: bright and airy by day and warm and earthy by night. Try the Mojito, Patria's signature drink. *250 Park Ave. So., nr. 20th St. (212-777-6211). (M) AE, MC, V.*



Photograph by Carina Salvi.

Opening

Daddy's Girl

Over the course of 30 years in the restaurant business, Sergio Bitici and his two brothers have owned Toscana, Chelsea Trattoria, Minetta Tavern, and Grand Ticino. Now he's taken on a new partner—his daughter Violetta, who persuaded him to open Macelleria (Italian for "butcher shop") in the geographically appropriate meatpacking district. Lespinasse alum Joseph Haber oversees a rib-sticking "Italian mountain" menu of wild boar, fennel sausages, roast pheasant, and slow-roasted baby lamb. He's even ventured far enough north to plunder Mitteleuropa for fondue, Sachertorte, and bollito misto with sauerkraut and horseradish. If this all sounds prohibitively heavy, there's always tapas and eighteen wines by the glass at the bar. (48 Gansevoort Street; 212-741-2555.)

The Pump Energy Food—There simply isn't any way to cheat at this "Physical Fitness Restaurant" and takeout shop. The falafel is baked, not fried; the tuna is low-sodium; and all the egg dishes are whites-only. In fact there's no fried food at all, no oil period, not even a soda in the house. *113 E. 31st St. (212-213-5733). Also, 40 W. 55th St. (246-6844). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Rossini's—This elegant split-level restaurant offers Northern Italian cuisine and live music nightly. Chef Gilberto specializes in seafood, and private parties are easily accommodated. *108 E. 38th St. (212-683-0135). (E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Tivoli Bar and Grill—This midtown restaurant aspires to attract a hip, young crowd. Thus, live music on Thursday night, a D.J. on Saturdays, and a menu heavy on seafood like raw shellfish, fish and chips, and lobster ravioli in seafood broth. There's also a happy hour, with all its attendant grub: chicken wings, mozzarella sticks, nachos, and a complimentary appetizer of the day. *515 Third Ave., nr. 34th St. (212-532-3300). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar—This national chain invades Manhattan's freshly scrubbed and reinvented 42nd Street with an eager-to-please, affordable menu heavy on burgers, steak, and fajitas. Out-of-towners will feel right at home. *234 W. 42nd St. (212-391-7414). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Chelsea Bistro & Bar—This friendly bistro became a neighborhood hangout virtually the day it opened. Try the delicious hanger steak and lamb shank, and experiment among the 200-odd wines on the well-chosen list. *358 W. 23rd St. (212-727-2026). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Fusion@Ohm—One of the new crop of all-in-one entertainment centers: dinner, dancing, and the ever-popular lounging on velvet furniture. Plus an international fusion menu that features Vietnamese vegetable spring rolls, rigatoni bolognese, and pistachio-crusted chicken breast with morel sauce. *16 W. 22nd St. (212-229-2000). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Hush—This Flatiron venture is part bar, part nightclub, part restaurant. If you find that last part the most interesting, you'll appreciate the New American menu, served in shareable portions. *17 W. 19th St. (212-989-4874). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Le Madri—This Chelsea mainstay has long enjoyed a reputation for informality and flavorful Italian fare. The garden is a wonderful warm-weather spot for a light lunch of salad and pasta or a more substantial repast like osso buco with gremolata or risotto with lemon and zucchini. *168 W. 18th St. (212-727-8022). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

World Yacht Dining Cruises—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—and sup on a selection from the "Best of New York" menu: a collaboration with some of the city's biggest culinary talents, featuring dishes based on recipes from the Sea Grill's Ed Brown, Aquavit's Marcus Samuelsson, and Montrachet's Remi Lauvand and dessert creations from Payard Pâtisserie, all prepared by World Yacht's executive chef Wayne Tuman. Jacket required. Reserve. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (212-630-8100). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Café Centro—A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cucina & Co.—This market-style takeout shop and café is ideally situated in the lobby of the MetLife Building to catch the crush of commuters passing through Grand Central. Breakfast pastries, specialty sandwiches, baked pastas, steak-frites, and "Dinners for Two" keep the worker bees fueled throughout the day. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-682-2700). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Della Femina—Jerry Della Femina tapped Kevin Penner, the very talented chef from the adman's Hamptons hot spot, to supervise the stoves at his Manhattan outpost. His city food places the same premium on high-quality ingredients in dishes like day-boat halibut, langoustines with black truffles, and rib-eye steak. Sit at the bar, converse with the very able and accommodating bartender, and try to guess the identity of every A- and B-list celebrity in the collage of caricatures. *131 E. 54th St. (212-752-0111). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Divine Bar—This East Side establishment is all things to all people: a cigar bar, a wine bar, a tapas lounge, and a casual, couch-filled living room where local office workers can often be found, unwinding. The eclectic menu includes smoked-duck-breast bruschetta and chocolate fondue with fruit. *244 E. 51st St. (212-319-9463). (I) AE, MC, V.*

The Four Seasons—Philip Johnson designed this cathedral of modernity. Picasso did the tapestry. And the place remains a classic 30 years later. The Grill Room is where the term *power lunch* got its start in the seventies. The pool room is where the rest of us go for achingly expensive fare like foie gras and figs and chocolate velvet. *99 E. 52nd St. (212-754-9494). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Genki Sushi—Not your typical sushi bar but a moving conveyor belt with color-coded dishes that indicate the price of your lunch. This midtown branch is the first American outpost of an Asian megachain headquartered in Singapore. The restaurant, whose high-tech design incorporates a wall of exposed sound panels, Lucite chairs and stools, and a Warholian upholstery pattern, also offers bento boxes, vegetarian dishes, sashimi, and a varied sake selection. *9 E. 46th St. (212-983-5018). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Giambelli 50th Ristorante—Upscale Northern Italian fare served in a warm and cozy atmosphere. The chef imports esoteric varieties of pasta from Italy to prepare his specialties; the fish and meat dishes are as carefully considered. *46 E. 50th St. (212-688-2760). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Le Perigord—This romantic French restaurant near Sutton Place is famous for its classically prepared, elegantly presented French cuisine. The regular clientele, with a liberal smattering of celebrities and diplomats, is the type that dresses for dinner—a good thing, since jackets are required. Open Sundays. Private rooms available for parties. *405 E. 52nd St. (212-755-6244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Lespinasse—Marie Antoinette, where are you? This ultra-formal dining room in the St. Regis Hotel—think Versailles and you get the rococo drift—is where you'll find Christian Delouvrier's masterful classic French cooking. *2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (212-339-6719). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Maloney & Porcelli—A midtown steakhouse with something extra, courtesy of consulting chef David Burke's contributions—including something called "angry lobster"—plus whole leg of

The Underground Gourmet
Show Me Some Lovage

A tree isn't the only thing that grows in Brooklyn. As of late last month, one fertile Park Slope plot has been sprouting white-lightning corn, sugar-snap peas, and plum chutney with a seasonal zeal that would make Alice Waters proud. If Brooklyn is our Berkeley, Rose Water might be our approximation of Chez Panisse—or at least the informal, less expensive Chez Panisse Cafe. It's no accident that this market-minded, organically inclined restaurant has emerged in a neighborhood with a health-food co-op *and* a Greenmarket, though chef-owner Neil O'Malley (pictured, at left) needn't resort to either. He's intent on expanding his network of local farmers and producers, growers who can supply him with the ingredients he needs for his American-Mediterranean menu, from soup (a refreshing icy heirloom tomato) to nuts (pistachios drizzled over creamy homemade yogurt, swirled with thick, luscious rose-hip preserves). A meze plate, za'atar dressing on his Bibb-lettuce salad, and the vibrant charmoula sauce adorning his crispy celery-root pancake are delicious proof that when O'Malley left his last post at Oznot's Dish, he took his spice rack with him. But despite its name, Rose Water isn't Moroccan or Middle Eastern; it's got more in common, philosophically, with Savoy, where O'Malley used to work and where he first met John Tucker (at right), then manager and now co-owner of Rose Water. Despite the North African nuances, their new home is as all-American as O'Malley's moist grilled-chicken pieces over fresh corn kernels, infused with lovage and vanilla, or an expertly breaded and sublimely juicy pork chop from California's Niman ranch. Even the charcuterie plate of sliced sausage and Spanish sheep's-milk cheese is subjected to a Brooklyn bias. Instead of the customary cornichons, it's accessorized with summer pickles—and not the kind from a jar. "Our pickler, Todd, flavors kirbies with lemon and mint," says Tucker matter-of-factly, as if every restaurant had such a specialist on the payroll. (787 Union Street, Brooklyn; 718-783-3800.)

Robin Raisfeld

lamb, an extensive wine list, and an innovative menu of American classics. A second-floor party room has a fireplace and skylights. *37 E. 50th St. (212-750-2233). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Michael Jordan's The Steak House N.Y.C.—It's hard not to feel like a king surveying his kingdom from the balcony of the awesomely renovated Grand Central Terminal. And it's easy, with David Walzog's high-protein menu, to eat like an athlete: Choose from Maine lobster, a 44-ounce double porterhouse for two, barbecued short ribs, pepper-crusted buffalo sirloin, and a superlative New York strip. There's a private dining room and a private smoking room. And if you (or your progeny) so desire, you can mark the occasion with a trip to the souvenir shop, for basketball- or steak-themed paraphernalia like baby rattles and dog bones. *23 Vanderbilt Ave., Grand Central Terminal (212-655-2300). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Monkey Bar—Since its swanky renovation by David Rockwell, this midtown landmark has undergone several chef changes. Andrew Chase has infused the menu and the retro-feeling dining room with new spirit by way of inspired new dishes like coriander-crusted duck breast with Bartlett pears, onion tart with potatoes and bacon, and loin of rabbit with confit and foie gras ravioli. Plus a special cocktail-hour canapé menu, to be enjoyed in the monkey-mural bar with nightly piano music. *60 E. 54th St. (212-838-2600). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Morton's of Chicago—This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. *551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (212-972-3315). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Naples 45 Ristorante e Pizzeria—This sprawling Italian restaurant and carry-out in the MetLife building serves authentic Neapolitan cuisine, including excellent thin-crust pizzas, baked to order by experienced pizza masters imported directly from Italy. Also try the twice-baked sandwiches and the wide array of wines by the glass. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-972-7001). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Nino's Positano—As is the wont of upscale Italian restaurants, this one—a more serene, mural-painted version of Nino's uptown—specializes in the food of a certain region, in this case, the south, and Positano in particular. But the menu still manages to read like the greatest hits of the Italian kitchen, with appetizers like Caprese salad, truffle-buttered asparagus with Parmesan, and lemony fried artichokes. Pastas range from the simple (fusilli with tomato-basil sauce) to the more complex (Cognac-infused seafood risotto), and main courses traverse similar territory. Whole roasted branzino is filleted tableside, making it almost as dramatic as Nino's famous lobster fra diavolo for two. *890 Second Ave., nr. 47th St. (212-355-5540). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Oceana—Fish-savant Rick Moonen's extensive and excellent seafood menu make this room, reminiscent of the dining cabin on an elegant ocean liner, a favorite for business lunches and romantic evenings alike. The upstairs bar is a perfect retreat for cocktails and seafood snacks in midtown. *55 E. 54th St. (212-759-5941). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Oscar's—This contemporary American brasserie is named for the Waldorf-Astoria's longtime maître d', Oscar Tschirky, creator of such legendary dishes as the Waldorf salad and veal Oscar. The menu leans toward updated classics like yellowfin-tuna tartare and smoked Hudson Valley foie gras with truffled red-wine marmalade. Designer Adam Tihany transported the history-laden dining room into the twenty-first century with a much-needed face-lift. *Lexington Ave. at 50th St. (212-872-4920). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Peacock Alley—Under talented chef Laurent Gras, the Waldorf's posh dining room has broken with mealtime tradition. Rather than offer straightforward appetizers and entrées, Gras divides his menu into categories like ocean/river (lobster soup flavored with chestnuts), field/forest (seaweed and field greens), black truffle (Venetian pasta), and farm (rabbit chop wrapped in pasta). And rather than price each individual dish, he charges by the number of courses one selects: $54 for three, $67 for four, and up. The sommelier's suggested wine pairings are available for an additional price, and jackets are required. *301 Park Ave., in the Waldorf-Astoria (212-872-4895). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Pig 'n' Whistle on Third—There's plenty of convivial Irish-pub-style cheer in this East Side spinoff of a popular midtown haunt. The basic American menu offers staples like shepherd's pie, barbecued ribs, and onion loaf, plus panini sandwiches. Live music Saturday night, and "Irish breakfast" brunch offered on weekends. *922 Third Ave., nr. 55th St. (212-688-4646). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Smith & Wollensky—Carnivores keep this popular steakhouse jumping. All wood and brass, it has the look of a private club, the noise of a locker room, and a serious wine cellar. *Third Ave. at 49th St. (212-753-1530). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tropica—Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the salmon and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves the most imaginative seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. *200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (212-867-6767). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

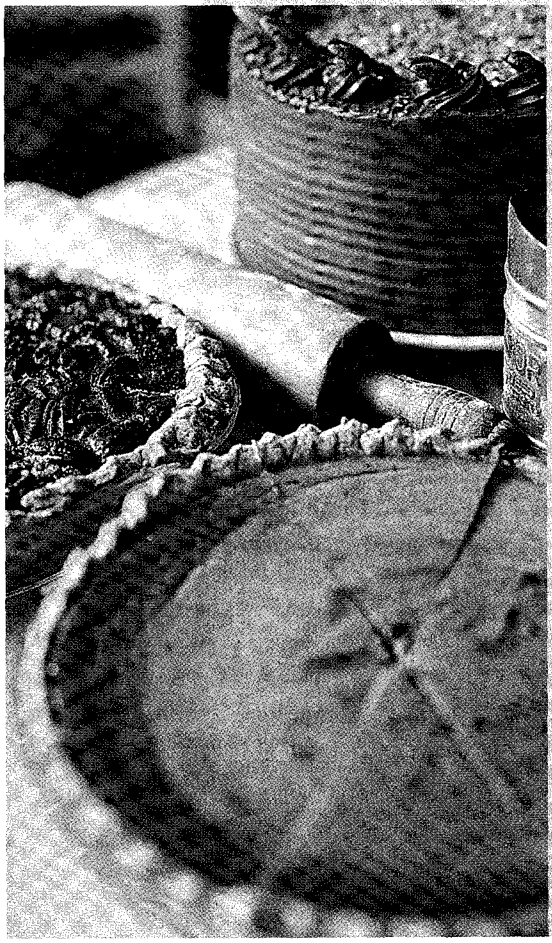
Vong—Wow! This is Thai to die for. Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten's little Third Avenue-by-way-of-Bangkok palace was designed by architect David Rockwell, and it's a showy temple indeed—there's gold leaf on those walls. The menu's full of wonders, starting with the crab rolls and coconut-milk-and-galangal soup. *200 E. 54th St. (212-486-9592). (E) AE, CB, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne—After extensive renovations, the elegant American restaurant in this posh midtown hotel has reopened with a new look and a new, sophisticated menu. A few of the more notable dishes include a warm lobster salad with braised mango, and a confit of wild striped bass with a shallot vinaigrette. *700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula (212-903-3918). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Algonquin—Draws on its history as the fabled stomping ground of literary giants. The wood-paneled sitting-room-like lobby still holds many imaginations captive. *59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Ben Benson's Steak House—This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is devoted entire-



Opening
Southern Comforts

We already knew that Norma Jean Darden (pictured, second from left), the chef-owner of Spoonbread Catering and its offshoot, *Miss Mamie's Spoonbread Too café*, inherited her love of southern food from her mother (Miss Mamie herself). But we didn't realize the down-home cooking gene is so widespread in the Darden clan: Norma Jean's aunt Maude's smothered chicken may have been as good as Mom's. In her honor, *Darden has opened Miss Maude's Spoonbread Too*, a cheery country-kitchen knockoff of the original. The menu offers Spoonbread classics like fried chicken, North Carolina barbecue ribs, and Louisiana catfish, and a few of Aunt Maude's specialities, including chicken soup, oxtails, pies and cakes, and old-fashioned ice-cream sundaes. (547 *Lenox Avenue, near 137th Street*; 212-690-3100.)

Miss Mamie's
SPOONBREAD TO
Restaurant
W. 110th St. Harlem
Miss Maude's
SPOONBREAD TOO
Restaurant
Lenox Ave., Harlem NYC

ly to the consumption of standards like lobsters, crab cakes, veal, and four cuts of steak. Free validated parking available. *123 W. 52nd St. (212-581-8888). (E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Brasserie Bit—With David Ruggerio supervising the kitchen at this new theater-district restaurant, customers can expect a bit of Italian cooking to seep into the French-American brasserie menu. Pre- or post-curtain appetites are sated with hearty fare like braised short ribs with olive-oil-enriched mashed potatoes, and garlic-roasted pork shank. Want something less heavy-duty? Try the European tapas, served at the serpentine zinc bar. *258 W. 44th St. (212-869-4440). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (212-956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Da Rosina—A convenient pretheater location, specializing in homemade pasta and other casual Italian fare, like baked polenta marinara and veal scallopine. Try the $20 prix fixe dinner. *342 W. 46th St. (212-977-7373). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Côte Basque—Jean-Jacques Rachou's transplanted shrine to French cooking has preserved the Basque murals and the coddled atmosphere of the original location one block east. Modernized, with a menu more "American with a French accent," the old-world institution has been successfully reborn. *60 W. 55th St. (212-688-6525). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Langan's—American cuisine in a theater-district shrine to the stars of stage and screen. Food ranges from Black Angus steaks and herb-crusted rack of lamb to crab cakes and marinated duck breast. Theatergoers will want to know about the $23.50 prix fixe dinner, and music lovers about the live jazz and blues on Saturday night and the Sunday jazz brunch. *150 W. 47th St. (212-869-5482). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have earned him a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (212-489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Pyrénées—French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. *251 W. 51st St. (212-246-0044). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Local—This theater-district American bistro has lots of cozy booths and turns out sophisticated, refreshingly imaginative fare with international accents but doesn't go overboard. Try the pan-seared scallops with Maine crab cake and sweet-corn chowder; the roasted North Atlantic salmon with spring vegetables; and the excellent desserts. *224 W. 47th St. (212-921-2005). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (212-767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Morrell Wine Bar & Cafe—The inspired idea behind this unique restaurant (adjacent to the relocated Morrell wine shop) is to serve a menu that integrates perfectly with the wine list—no small feat, since the inventory runs to 1,000 different bottles and a hundred by-the-glass selections. The kitchen incorporates vino into the victuals, as in Barolo-braised lamb shank with chestnut-flour polenta, and the foie gras club sandwich with *porto* marmalade. Seating is at the serpentine bar, behind it, and on a mezzanine level. *1 Rockefeller Plaza (212-262-7700). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Nakagawa—By virtue of its very location—about two avenues east of the heart of the theater district—this casual Japanese restaurant is a sensible spot for supper before the curtain. Sushi, shabu-shabu, salmon steak, and beef Negimaki are examples of the pretheater offerings. *7 W. 44th St. (212-869-8077). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Osteria del Circo—This place is always buzzing, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (212-265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Redeye Grill—Just what the Carnegie Hall neighborhood needed: a huge room with nudes on the pillars and all manner of smoked fish on the bar. The signature dish, dancing shrimp, is great for sharing. And don't leave without sampling the banana-cream pie. *888 Seventh Ave., at 56th St. (212-541-9000). (M–E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

René Pujol—This theater-district oasis offers fine provincial French cooking in a sweet country-inn atmosphere. The conventionally familiar menu includes such specials as pan-seared duck breast with fruit chutney, steamed cod with coriander and ginger vinaigrette, and a salad of warm lobster, mesclun, and julienned vegetables. *321 W. 51st St. (212-246-3023). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sitar Indian Cuisine—This casual restaurant attracts office workers and midtown's ever-growing hordes of tourists, who come for house specialties like ginger chicken, lamb shaslik, onion bhajia, and the always-popular chicken tikka masala. *58 W. 56th St. (212-581-1155). (I–M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Tapika—Chef David Walzog's spicy cooking has transformed a formerly subdued space into a lively canteen with his version of haute Southwestern. Try the black-bean purée with chorizo and garlic flatbread or the grilled rabbit loin with cilantro oil and habanero sauce. The bar has its own snack menu and a super selection of microbrews and tequilas. *950 Eighth Ave., at 56th St. (212-397-3737). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Torre di Pisa—David Rockwell designed this midtown Italian import as a surreal version of the Leaning Tower. Pane fritto con prosciutto di Parma and fagotto al funghi porcini are examples of the chef's updated Tuscan standards. A separate cigar/smoking room is available for private parties. *19 W. 44th St. (212-398-4400). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Utsav Festive India—Only the bar of this regional Indian restaurant is located at street level; the contemporary dining room itself is built into a bridge spanning two midtown skyscrapers. The lunch buffet costs a paltry $10.95, while à la carte entrées include ginger rack of lamb, tandoori filet mignon, and Bengali fish paturi. The management promises a lineup of food festivals highlighting the varied cooking styles of the subcontinent. *1185 Sixth Ave., nr. 46th St. (212-575-2525). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Wu Kong—Shanghai soup dumplings continue to emigrate out of Chinatown—and Flushing—and into neighborhoods formerly deprived of the intense pork-and-crab-infused mouthfuls. In addition, there's Grand Marnier jumbo shrimp, smoked vegetable duck, and sliced beef tendon with hot pepper sauce, plus a full sushi menu. *30 W. 46th St. (212-997-4757). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

57th–60th Streets

Armani Café—This stylish midtown haven for weary shoppers (and informed eaters) on the sixth floor and rooftop terrace of the clothing store offers wonderfully fresh salads, al dente pastas, delicious sandwiches, and entrée specials like chicken breast with lentils, roasted vegetables, and polenta. *601 Madison Ave., nr. 57th St. (212-715-0500). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Brooklyn Diner U.S.A.—It's comfort-food heaven: big portions of exuberantly non-diet Americana like pigs in a blanket, sliced from the overgrown house "fifteen-bite hot dog"; a fresh-turkey sandwich on a buttery roll with stellar mashed potatoes and cranberries that taste better than the day after Thanksgiving; ham-flecked linguine baked in a too-rich-to-finish sauce that modestly bills itself as macaroni and cheese. *212 West 57th Street (212-977-2280). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Gabriel's Bar & Restaurant—Just four blocks from Lincoln Center, this acclaimed Northern Italian favorite of theatergoers and neighborhood regulars alike manages to be unintimidatingly comfortable and culinarily sophisticated at the same time. Hearty dishes include gnocchi in duck ragù, braised short ribs in a sauce of dark beer and sage with a semolina custard, and wood-grilled tuna with fresh horseradish. The hot chocolate has a cult following. *11 W. 60th St. (212-956-4600). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Jennifer's Restaurant—This casual Italian restaurant serving well-prepared standard and classic Italian-American dishes, including shrimp stuffed with crabmeat and linguini with whole lobster in a garlicky tomato sauce, is a welcome refuge for tourists and local businesspeople who've had it with West 57th Street's theme-restaurant circus. *117 W. 58th St. (212-397-4256). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (212-371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Nascimento—This fun, romantic Brazilian restaurant with a supplement of Italian dishes features live entertainment nightly and Brazilian music on Saturdays. Try the authentic Bahian specialties like moqueca de peixe (fish stew made with dende oil) and Brazil's hearty national black bean dish from Rio, feijoada completa. *1068 First Ave., nr. 58th St. (212-755-6875). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (212-265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Shelly's New York—Bronx-born, Brooklyn-obsessed, Manhattan-based restaurateur Shelly Fireman tends to make big, personal statements: the flashy neon façade of his Brooklyn Diner USA, Fireman's of Brooklyn, and this, the latest place made in his own image (in a space that was originally an Art Deco–era Horn & Hardart). Only the assimilative Fireman would offer towering shellfish platters alongside newfangled chicken chow mein, barbecued ribs, and a burger audaciously crowned with seared foie gras and make it work. *104 W. 57th St. (212-245-2422). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

Cafe Crocodile—A French Mediterranean bistro with dishes ranging from Provençal to Moroccan in an intimate, romantic townhouse crowded with flowers and oil paintings. Attracts serious foodies from the neighborhood and the occasional gaggle of well-informed Euro-tourists. *354 E. 74th St. (212-249-6619). (M) MC, V.*

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss with the incredible curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (212-996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Fireman's of Brooklyn—The man behind midtown's nostalgic Brooklyn Diner expands on his outer-borough fantasy with this seafood house, which features a shrimp, oyster, and chowder bar; market-fresh fish; and landlubber options like filet mignon and "Bubba Fireman's chicken." *1081 Third Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-838-7570). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place.

Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

Hi-Life Restaurant & Lounge—A seamless fusion of a steakhouse and an ocean-liner lounge. The dining room's landscape is speckled with round booths so big and luxurious that they seem structural. This place has two gears: As the evening wears on, the young-moms-with-strollers eatery gives way to an East Side hot spot complete with a sushi bar. *1340 First Ave., at 72nd St. (212-249-3600). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Isle of Capri—Three steps away from the hustle and bustle of Bloomingdale's, here's a cozy Italian spot that's been around for 40 years, serving specialties like pappardelle con porcini and trippa alla Calabrese. *1028 Third Ave., at 61st St. (212-223-9430). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Jo Jo—The grilled chicken with chickpea frites is a great dish. But then, Jean-Georges Vongerichten doesn't make many mistakes in this elegant, jewel-like dining room situated on two floors of an East Sixties townhouse. *160 E. 64th St. (212-223-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (212-988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the haute neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (212-644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *1596 Second Ave., nr. 83rd St. (212-585-3838). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (212-935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Primavera—This elegant uptown restaurant serves sophisticated renditions of Northern Italian food, like baby eels with oil and garlic, and roasted baby goat. The comfortable wood-paneled room, lit with antique fixtures and filled with fresh flowers, brings a touch of luxury to the neighborhood. *1578 First Ave., nr. 82nd St. (212-861-8608). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sel & Poivre—Stanching the flow downtown for bistro fare. Regulars find what they are looking for in this quaint, countrified space. The country-French cuisine includes specialties like steak au poivre, bouillabaisse, and roasted chicken, and the prix fixe menus are a bargain. *853 Lexington Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-517-5780). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Trata—With its fish-market display, its Greek spreads and salads, and its simply grilled seafood (sushi-quality octopus, for instance), this bustling Upper East Side sideline of the Patsy's pizza chain offers an affordable, less dramatic alternative to Estiatorio Milos, where the chef used to work. *1331 Second Ave., nr. 70th St. (212-535-3800). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Via Quadronno—A traditional Milanese panini bar run by the same people who operate Sant Ambroeus, a happy coincidence when it comes time to order dessert. (Of course, should you decide to forgo the signature sorbetti and gelati, there are three versions of tirami su to contemplate.) In addition to offering warmed ciabatta sandwiches, the menu lists salads, carpaccio, lasagna, and fondue (the latter available only at dinner). As at any self-respecting paninoteca, wine and espresso are the featured beverages. *25 E. 73rd St. (212-650-9880). (M) AE, MC, V.*

ASK GAEL

What? Another steakhouse in the West Fifties?

It's bold, if not reckless, that Angelo & Maxie's chose to clone itself across the street from the esteemed steak station Ben Benson's. Do we really need another chophouse just minutes from Ruth's Chris, the Palm, and the new DelFrisco's? Well, yes you do, if you crave a solid hunk of charbroiled sirloin at $21.95, a smart discount from the competitors. Then there's the house's unmatched $19.99 lunch—soup or salad, the New York strip (or grilled fillet, fillet au poivre, chicken breast, or salmon), and choice of dessert. Alas, bargain seekers may have to put up with kitchen delays, an occasional scent of searing, and a server flung into duty with no tutoring at all—or did someone really instruct her to bring the bill between dessert and coffee (as she confided)? Somehow, the design that seemed butch and amusing downtown feels prefab here. And I don't need a porter sweeping up all around my table midway through dinner. (1285 Sixth Avenue, entrance on 52nd Street; 212-459-1222.)

Above 60th Street, West Side

Bello Giardino—As the name implies, this pleasingly priced neighborhood Italian has a nice garden and a friendly staff serving well-prepared standards. Try the lobster ravioli and the red snapper cooked with white wine. *71 West 71st St. (212-875-1512). (I–M) ($).*

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (212-877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Penang—This Malaysian mini-dynasty began in Queens and has sprouted multiple Manhattan locations. Sample such exotic offerings as roti canai, beef rendang, and sarang burung in environs that strive to evoke the tropics. *240 Columbus Ave., at 71st St. (212-769-3988). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Picholine—Chef Terrance Brennan's French-Mediterranean cuisine is as beautiful to look at as it is delicious to eat. Try the risotto, smoky with tender duck and wild mushrooms, and velvety foie gras with peach coulis, and save room for a glass of port to accompany the amazingly rich and well-chosen cheese course. *35 W. 64th St. (212-724-8585). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Restaurant 222—Cozy and romantic, with the feel of a townhouse, Frank Valenza's top-rated New American West Sider is a luxurious surprise in a neighborhood nearly bereft of them. The menu is full of high-ticket items like Beluga caviar, Kobe steak, truffles, and foie gras, which makes the $29.95 pretheater dinner, available from 5 to 6:30, a great deal. And now, lunch is served Tuesday through Friday. *222 W. 79th St. (212-799-0400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sapphire Indian Cuisine—A couple of partners from TriBeCa's Salaam Bombay have brought regional Indian cuisine to Columbus Circle, an area in sore need of a tandoori infusion. The prix fixe lunch buffet is a bargain, and all the currently trendy territories (Goa, Gujarat) are well-represented. *1845 Broadway, nr. 61st St. (212-245-4444). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sarabeth's—This New York institution is a homey place for upscale down-home food like chicken potpie and pancakes. It also offers a children's menu and a mouthwatering bakery counter, with homemade, award-winning jams and preserves. *423 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (212-496-6280). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Brooklyn

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensational antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-230-0711). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Peter Luger—Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

Two Tom's—Firehouse-kitchen ambience and a waiter who tells you what you want to eat. The double-rib pork chops are peerless, and the escarole is great, too, but refuse the mercilessly overcooked pasta when it's offered. Eat early during the week and call ahead on weekends. Regular private parties make getting a table frustrating, but it's always worth the trouble. *255 Third Ave., nr. Union St. (718-875-8689). (I) ($).*

Photograph by Carina Salvi.

in concert

The Chamber Music Society...Pavarotti...New York City Opera

Ground Rules:
This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Classical Music

Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio—Opens the season at the Tisch Center for the Arts with the premiere of *A Child's Reliquary*, by Richard Danielpour; Mozart's Piano Trio in B flat; and Brahms's Piano Trio in B major. 9/12 and 9/13 at 8. *92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-996-1100); $30.*

The Chamber Music Society—Launches its fall program with an all-Baroque evening, including Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*. 9/13 at 8, with preconcert reception at 6:30 in the Stanley H. Kaplan penthouse. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-875-5050); $250 with preconcert reception and dinner with artists, $100 with reception, $27.50–$50 for concert only.*

Concertante Chamber Players—Premiere *Serenade for Strings* by Polish composer Jan Radzynski in their first concert this season, also featuring Strauss's melancholy *Metamorphosen* and Mozart's *String Quintet in B flat Major*. 9/13 at 8. *Merkin Concert Hall at the Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (212-501-3330); $15.*

Luciano Pavarotti—Returns to Madison Square Garden for the first time in fourteen years, accompanied by soprano Annalisa Raspagliosi and the Opera Orchestra of New York. 9/14 at 8. *Madison Square Garden (212-307-7171), or www.ticketmaster.com; $23–$303.*

Toshi Reagon, Gary Lucas, and John Renbourn (guitar)—Continue the New York Guitar Festival with a program of blues titled "At the Crossroads—A Tribute to Robert Johnston." 9/14 at 8. *Merkin Concert Hall at the Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. (212-501-3330); $20, or $45 for the series.*

Lori Sims (piano)—The gold-medalist at the Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition presents works by Schumann, Beethoven's *Eroica Variations*, Sofia Gubaidulina's *Chaconne*, and the world premiere of Curtis Curtis-Smith's *Etudes for Piano*, 9/16 at 8. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $15–$25.*

St. Bartholomew's Church —The choir sings David Conte's *Elegy for Matthew*, composed in memory of Matthew Shepard. The service also includes Lou Harrison's *Mass to St. Anthony*, orchestrated for strings, trumpet, and harp, 9/17 at 11. *St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 51st St. (212-378-0227); free, although offerings are accepted.*

Opera

New York City Opera—Begins its fall series with Donizetti's *Roberto Deveraux*, directed by Mark Lamos. Lauren Flanigan sings her first Queen Elizabeth, and Fernando De La Mora makes his debut in the title role. 9/12–10/7, Tues. through Thurs. at 7:30, Fri. and Sat. at 1:30 and 8. *New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (212-870-5570); $25–$98.*

Amato Opera—Opens the autumn season with Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. 9/16–10/15, Fri. and Sat. at 7:30, Sun. at 2:30 and 7:30. *319 Bowery (212-228-8200); $25, $20 seniors and children under 12.*

Dance

A Tribute to Maxine Glorsky—Friends and colleagues of the renowned dance stage manager collaborate in a celebratory concert that includes performances by the White Oak Dance Project, the Lar Lubovitch Dance Company, and many others, followed by a party for VIP ticket holders. 9/13 at 7. *Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (212-242-0800); $20. For information about VIP tickets, call 212-533-4974.*

Dancenow Downtown Festival: The Upclose Gallery Series—The festival's signature event features fifteen artists including Stuard Hodes and Alice Terstein with the SoHo gallery as their backdrop. 9/13 at 7 and 9. *OK Harris Gallery, 383 West Broadway; $10 single ticket, $4 with dance card.*

Jody Oberfelder—Premieres *Slay the Dragon*, choreographed for six acrobatic dancers and set to original music by John Zorn, and Tchaikovsky's *Piano Concerto No. 1*. 9/14–10/7, Thurs. through Sat. at 8. *The Flea Theater, 41 White St. (212-226-2407); $20, $15 students.*

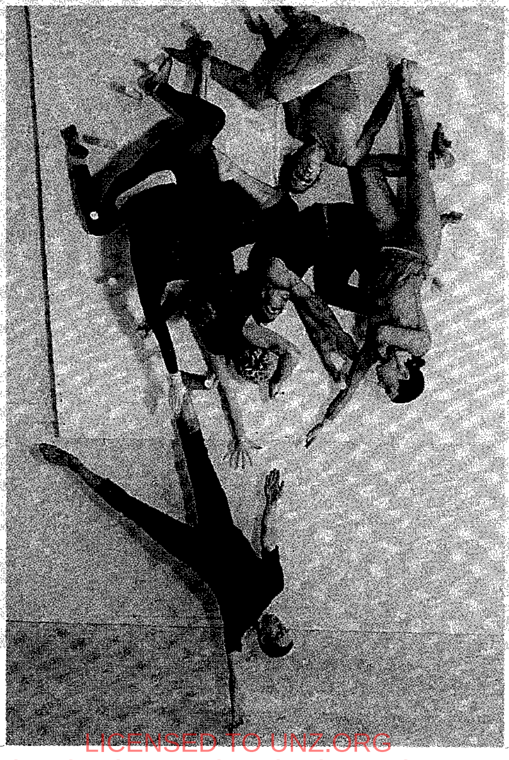
Fall Passages 2000—The HIV Arts Network presents a dance marathon to support its work, 9/15–17 at 8. *Merce Cunningham Dance Studio, 55 Bethune St., 11th floor (212-385-4945); $50, $10 students, both including post-performance reception on September 15.*

Dancenow Downtown Festival: All-Star Series—The festival concludes with an all-day dance marathon, beginning with performances at the Carmine Center's outdoor pool, moving to the gym, and concluding in the center's Great Hall. 9/16 at 12:30, 2, and 7. *Carmine Center, 1 Clarkson Street, at Seventh Ave. South. Each performance $10 single ticket, $4 with dance card. Great Hall event $15 single ticket, $10 with dance card.*

Preview

Knights Out

In between teaching dance at public schools, participating in Lincoln Center's outreach program, and rehearsing *X-Cheerleaders*, a dark take on sports and sexual exploitation she performed at the recent Fringe Festival, choreographer Jody Oberfelder sneaked in some time alone at her studio. If that weren't enough, dragons were spreading terror through the fairy tales she'd been reading to her children, and, she says, "the movement I came up with on my body was very fierce. I felt all the sinews of muscle sink, as the movement kept getting lower and lower to the ground in this animal way. Then I realized this was the kernel of a new piece." The result is *Slay the Dragon*, which will be premiered this week at the Flea Theater. The piece is set to Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 and original music by composer John Zorn, who was inspired by spaghetti Westerns. "There's that 'good guy, bad guy' feeling in Zorn's music," Oberfelder explains. "It takes all kinds of surprising turns." As does the dance, in which the five performers tumble from one another's shoulders, trip themselves up, and bend themselves into a human catapult and a medieval torture machine. After all, Oberfelder argues, humans have always been striving to slay their own dragons. "They are scaly, massive beasts within ourselves, within partnerships," she says. "They materialize when we rear our own heads and say something nasty, or when we feel other people's hostility." (See "Dance.") **TARA PEPPER**



Photograph by Julie Lemberger.

nightlife

Tony Bennett...Barenaked Ladies...Emmylou Harris

Concerts

Barenaked Ladies—9/16 at 8. Tickets through WPLJ 95.5 only. *Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. (212-997-1003).*

B. B. King Blues Festival 2000—9/16 at 6:30: Featuring B. B. King, Buddy Guy, Susan Tedeschi, Corey Harris. *Jones Beach Theater, Wantagh, Long Island (212-307-7171). $18–$45.*

Hanson—9/11 at 7. *Hammerstein Ballroom, 311 W. 34th St. (212-307-7171). Sold out.*

Less Than Jake—9/15 at 7:30: With The Suicide Machines. *Roseland Ballroom, 239 W. 52nd St. (212-307-7171). $20–$25.*

Tim McGraw & Faith Hill—9/16 at 8. *Madison Square Garden, 34th St. and Seventh Ave. (212-307-7171). $32.50–$65.*

Tony Bennett—With Diana Krall. 9/16 at 8. *Radio City Music Hall, 50th St. and Sixth Ave. (212-307-7171). $45–$100.*

Small Stages

Arlene Grocery—9/11: Sophia Ramos Dupret; Inbetween Blue. 9/12: Collidge; Ruth Gerson. 9/13: Fagen; Kharma Zhu. 9/14: The Tom Kittband; Corky Freak. 9/15: Life in a Blender; Brave New Girl. 9/16: Pets; Steak. 9/17: The Champion Soul Band. 9/18: The Wait; Paul Thorn. 9/19: 40 Ft. Ringo; Lucky Town. *95 Stanton St. (212-358-1633). $.*

B. B. King Blues Club & Grill—9/14: John Hammond. 9/15: Shemekia Copeland. 9/16: Sue Foley. *243 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144).*

Baby Jupiter—9/11: Chris Nash; Michele Riganese. 9/12: Morricone Youth; Lucky Joe. 9/13: EGQ; The Suckers. 9/14–9/15: "NYC Live" CD-release party. 9/18: Chameleon. 9/19: Coby Brown Group. *170 Orchard St. (212-780-0287).*

Bottom Line—9/11: Annie Golden; Patti Rothberg. 9/14: Richard Shindell. 9/15–9/16: Buddy & Julie Miller; Solas. 9/19: Phil Roy. *15 W. 4th St. (212-228-7880).*

Bowery Ballroom— 9/13: Liquid Soul. 9/14: Chris Whitley. 9/15: Doughty. 9/19: The The. *6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111).*

Fez—Thursdays: Mingus Big Band. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays: Kiki & Herb: "Playing for Time." 9/12: Heather Eatman; Greta Gertler; Eman. 9/13: Va Va Voom Room. 9/17: Brini Maxwell. 9/19: Matthew Ryan. *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).*

Irving Plaza—9/13: Dicky Betts Band; Larry McCray. 9/15–9/16: Super Diamond. 9/17: Ted Nugent. 9/19: Wilco. *17 Irving Pl. (212-777-6800).*

Joe's Pub—An intimate space that boasts the most eclectic booking in town. Expect everything from torch singers to underground hip-hoppers to New Age composers. Mondays: "Benefit," a downtown music revue. Tuesdays: "Original Roses" with D.J. Beverly Bond. Wednesdays: Reggae music with "Fever." Thursdays: Editors, scene-makers, and boldface names take their turns spinning their favorite records with the "Personality D.J. Series." Sundays: The deep-house-oriented "Love Bazaar" with D.J. MKL. 9/12: Pamela Knowles and Yusef Komunyakaa; 9/14: David Yazbek. 9/15: Arto Lindsay Vinicius Cantuaria Duo. 9/16: Betty. 9/17: Black Lily. 9/18–9/20: Emmylou Harris. *425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).*

Knitting Factory—9/11: PoBand. 9/12: Kelley Stoltz; Matt Keating. 9/13: Valentine Six; Kid Congo Powers. 9/14: Joseph Jarman Trio. 9/15–9/17: Zooid; Henry Threadgill. 9/18: Alternative Grooves of Blackness. 9/19: Pharaoh's Daughter. *74 Leonard St. (212-219-3055).*

Makor—9/12: Peggy Stern; Clogs. 9/13: Avram Fefer Trio. 9/14: Julia Greenberg; Health & Happiness Show; Friends. 9/17: Anat Fort Trio; MOTA Trio. 9/19: Songwriters Hall of Fame. *35 W. 67th St. (212-601-1000).*

Manitoba's—Mondays: Beat Rodeo. Thursdays in September: Gret Garing. Fridays: Adam Roth. 9/12: "Hardcore" with Misstress Formika. 9/13: Jeremy Wallace. 9/16: Truck. 9/17: Fiona McBain. *99 Ave. B (212-982-2511).*

Maxwell's—9/12: Liquid Soul; DJ: Primitive Sound System. 9/13: Semi Automatic; The Turnoffs; Erase Errata. 9/14: Shiner. 9/15: Fat Possum Mississippi Juke Joint Tour: T-Model Ford; Paul Jones; Robert Belfour. 9/16: Todd Snider. 9/16: Blow Up; Circle Square; The Coots. *1039 Washington St., Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).*

Mercury Lounge—9/11: Vanessa Carlton. 9/12: Will Hoge. 9/13: Meat Puppets. 9/14: Fat Possum Juke Joint Caravan. 9/15: Speedball Baby; Knoxville Girls. 9/16: Silkworm. 9/17: Creme Blush; Muckaferguson. 9/18: Tahiti 80. 9/19: Richard Buckner. *217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700).*

Rodeo Bar—9/11: The Moonlighters. 9/12: Moonshine Messiahs. 9/13: Soozie Tyrell. 9/14: The Flying Neutrinos. 9/15: Bill Kirchen. 9/16: Phil Hummer and the Buzzards. 9/17: Leanne Westover and Strange Cargo. 9/18: Malcolm Holcomb. 9/19: Budd Woodward and the Nitro Express. *375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (212-683-6500).*

S.O.B.'s—9/11: Ricardo Lemvo and Makina Loca. 9/12: Major Figgas. 9/13–9/14: Cafa Tacuba. 9/15: Kelli Sae. 9/16: Brazooca. 9/18: Yousy Barbara. 9/19: Tony Rebel. *204 Varick St. (212-243-4940).*

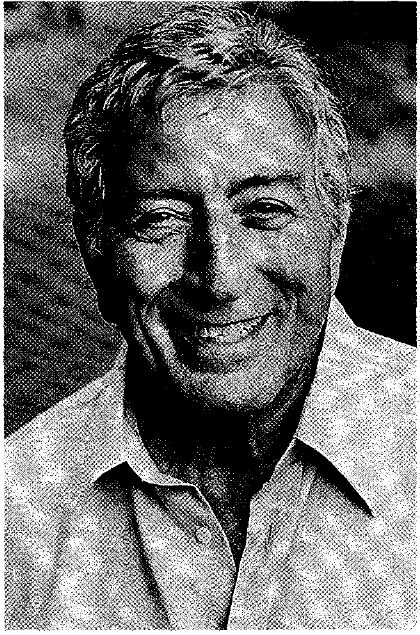
Wetlands—Mondays: D.J. Logic. Tuesdays: Illuminati. Thursdays: Groove Collective. 9/12: Swampadelica. 9/13: Fat Mama. 9/14: 7th House; The Clarks. 9/15: Ekoostik Hookah; Mindface. 9/16: Jupiter Coyote; The Ordinary Way. 9/17: Infinitee; D.J. Ese. 9/19: The Deadbeats. *161 Hudson St. (212-386-3600) $.*

Performance

Back in the Swing

He may be a fading blip on the pop-culture radar since his *Unplugged* special, but Tony Bennett (pictured) isn't slowing down. "I've been touring all over the world, playing some of the biggest venues I've ever performed at in my entire life," the 74-year-old crooner says, speaking by phone during a break from the *Late Show With David Letterman* rehearsals. "Here I am at this age doing more sold-out shows that I can remember. It's amazing." But Bennett isn't letting the road wear him down; he speaks about his shows with the passion of a musical missionary. "I'm bringing the great American songbook to the public," he says: "Berlin, Porter, Gershwin—these are artists you don't get to hear on the radio." And whether because of his *Unplugged* experience, the lingering effects of *Swingers,* or the hipster embrace of Rat Pack iconography, he says his audiences are younger than ever. "Most young people have never heard this music, so to them it sounds contemporary," he says. "And the energy they bring really charges the rest of the audience." Bennett's tour also gets a charge from opener Diana Krall, whom Bennett describes as "one of the few singers left in the great tradition of an Ella Fitzgerald or Billie Holiday." Bennett will bring his powerhouse show of standards to Radio City Music Hall on September 16. Even though he's been in the business for more than four decades, the idea of bringing a sold-out tour to such a prestigious venue still excites—and unnerves—him. "I'm a little nervous," he says with a laugh. "But I think I've finally learned how to do it."

ETHAN BROWN



Photograph by Mark Seliger.

Clubland

entro-Fly—Like Vinyl, Centro-Fly is hopping with big-name D.J. talent nearly every day of the week. Thursdays: "Subliminal Sessions" with D.J. Erick Morillo and occasional special guests like Armand Van Helden and "Little" Louie Vega. The second Friday of every month: Long-running house party "N'Ice," which made an exodus from Baktun after more than a year at the meatpacking-district nightspot. Third Friday of every month: House party "Con-fu-sion," also a refugee from Baktun, with big-name D.J.'s like Chicago's Pierre. Saturdays: Energetic house and big beat with "Plant." The last Saturday of every month, Plant presents D.J.'s Junior Sanchez and Roger Sanchez (no relation), two of New York house music's finest. Sundays: Dressed-up hip-hop with "VIP Sundays" featuring D.J. Max Glazer and Jessica Rosenblum. Mondays: Frankie Inglese's retro soul, funk, and R&B party "Soul Kitchen." *45 W. 21st St. (212-803-7859).*

heetah—A tacky, jungle-themed club with a spacious dance floor and a decent sound system nonetheless. Wednesdays: Thursdays: "Clique," where the socialite set grooves to hip-hop beats. Fridays: Blokes go crazy to trance and house at "GBH" ("Great British House"). Saturdays: Thumping tribal house and live percussionists at "Cherchez La Femme." Sundays: "Boys Nite" with D.J. Merritt. *12 W. 21st St. (212-206-7770).*

rank's Lounge—A bare-bones bar and dance spot, which hosts Lorie and E-Man's frenzied but low-key house-music party "Bang the Party" every Friday. The party, which has been at venues all over town, from the 205 Club to Baktun, is just now settling into its own groove. And what a groove it is: On a recent Friday, track-suited break-dancers, baggy-pants-clad dancers, and bare-chested muscle men got down to the ecstatic house of D.J. White Mike with a floor-shaking intensity. *660 Fulton St., at S. Elliott St., Brooklyn (212-726-1322).*

un—This sprawling, bi-level, warehouselike space doesn't book big-name D.J. talent, but it's got one of the coolest interiors in clubland, with huge projections of Japanese *anime*, a vertiginous yet comfy balcony area, and a seemingly gravity-defying D.J. booth. Best of all, Fun recently snagged the cyber-fetish party "Click + Drag" from the now-defunct Mother. *130 Madison St., under the Manhattan Bridge (212-964-0303). $5.*

imelight—Turntable heavies like Jeff Mills and the "Gatecrasher" crew have already graced the decks since its reopening in late August, signaling a possible renaissance for Gatien and Co. Will it last? Only time will tell, but they'll need better, far more consistent promoters to make the club work again. *660 Sixth Ave., at 20th St. (212-807-7780).*

he Roxy—The cavernous Chelsea institution's deeply entertaining and mysteriously underattended Tuesday- and Wednesday-night roller-skating jam keeps boogie queens' wheels spinning till the wee hours. Fridays: "Big Fridays" offer big fun for the weekender straight crowd. Saturdays: Superstar D.J. Victor Calderone spins house for the Chelsea boys while hard-bodied go-go boys dance on the bar. *515 W. 18th St. (212-627-0404). $.*

hine—This downtown spot is now host to excellent, enthusiastically received D.J.-oriented nights as well as up-and-coming rock and dance acts. Mondays: "Giant Step Mondays" with the gloriously great D.J. Ron Trent. Tuesdays: "Prohibited Beatz," electronica in all its many and varied subgenres with D.J.'s Swingsett and Yoshi. Thursdays: Reggae and soul with "Mash Potatoes." Fridays: Hip-hop with D.J.'s Stretch Armstrong and Mateo. Saturdays: D.J. Greg Poole's dance-centric "Tremendous." *285 W. Broadway (212-941-0900).*

Spa—The health-and-wellness theme (white walls, bathrooms designed to look like saunas) is thankfully mostly unobtrusive, and the crowd is thankfully not excessively chic. Spa promoter Steven Lewis maintains the kind of balance between office *zhlubs*, club kids, and A-listers he pulled off so nicely in the early days of the now-defunct Life. Wednesdays: "Big Bad Dodgy Disco," with New Wave and rock spun by D.J. Paul Sevigny. Thursdays: Superpromoter Erich Conrad's "Glam," with D.J. Jackie Christie. Fridays: Marc Ronson and Grandmaster Flash spin hip-hop and R&B for the A-listers at "Hollywood 2000." *76 E. 13th St. (212-388-1060).*

Twilo—Twilo is the superclub of the moment, thanks to a revolving lineup of dance music's biggest marquee attractions. Wednesdays: The upstairs lounge hosts hard house and techno with "2K Wednesdays," a low-key alternative to the frenzied Friday nights. Fridays: World-class D.J.'s like Carl Cox, Sasha and Digweed, and Cassius play for a mixed crowd of drag divas and on-the-prowl straights. Saturdays: Aging club king D.J. Junior Vasquez spins for his bare-chested Chelsea-boy following. 9/8: Luis Diaz; Paul Van Dyk. *530 W. 27th St. (212-268-1600).*

Vinyl—Stripped of its liquor license, this once-hedonistic downtown space is now a dance-music purist's paradise and quite possibly the best club in the city. Wednesdays: "Little" Louie Vega spins at the relaxed, low-key (for now), dance-friendly (check out the break-dancers in the back of the room) house party "Dance Ritual." Fridays: Hard, trippy house (affectionately nicknamed "K-hole house" by its aficionados) from D.J. Danny Tenaglia. Saturdays: Timmy Regisford's fantastic house-music party "Shelter," which at about seven in the morning becomes the city's most adventurous party as Regisford bangs out everything from the Afro-beat of Fela Kuti to the ambient, pillow-soft house of Mr. Fingers. Sundays: François K, Joe Claussell, and Danny Krivit spin at the now legendary afternoon party "Body & Soul." Arrive early or you'll face a devastatingly long line at the door. *6 Hubert St. (212-343-1379).*

Photograph by Brigitte Lacombe.

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

Jazz

"Come Sunday: Jazz, the Church and Spirituality"—9/17 at 7. A free lecture with Dr. James A. Forbes, senior minister of the Riverside Church; Dr. Dwight Andrews, professor of music at Emory University; and Cyrus Chestnut, pianist. *St Paul's Chapel on the campus of Columbia University, 118th St. (212-854-0093).*

Birdland—Proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this classy boîte serves up some fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Sundays: Chico O'Farrill Afro-Cuban Jazz Big Band. Mondays: The Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Tuesdays: The Famous Duke Ellington Orchestra directed by Paul Ellington. 9/13: Carrie Smith. 9/14–9/16: Stanley Jordan. *315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080).*

Blue Note—With a great sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30. 9/12–9/17: Lee Konitz Trio; Kenny Burrell Quartet. *131 W. 3rd St. (212-475-8592).*

Cajun—A brassy and brightly lit bit of New Orleans in Chelsea, dedicated to Preservation Hall–style Dixieland. Regulars include Joe Muranyi, clarinetist for the last six years of Louis Armstrong's All Stars; Eddy Davis, a jazz banjoist; and Chuck Folds, a stride pianist and sometime accompanist to trumpet legend Doc Cheatham. *129 Eighth Ave., at 16th St. (212-691-6174).*

City Hall—Mondays in the Granite Room: The Charles Mingus Orchestra. $15 cover, $10 for students. *131 Duane St. (212-227-7777).*

Deanna's—This Lower East Side jazz haunt run by singer Deanna Kirk should give Tonic a run for its money. Open Tuesday through Sunday. Kirk performs on most nights. *107 Rivington St. (212-420-2258).*

Detour—With no cover and top-notch young players, this Village joint packs 'em in every night of the week. Sundays: Mike Magilligan. *349 E. 13th St. (212-533-6212).*

Dharma—An elegant little gem of a club, serving sounds from funky bop to "out" experimentalism on the historic shopping thoroughfare—just don't pay retail. Sets at 7 and 10. *174 Orchard St. (212-780-0313).*

Iridium—In the surreal basement across from Lincoln Center, you'll find formidable jazz comers and the occasional legend. Thoughtful table placement minimizes a couple of structural columns' potentially disastrous effects on sight lines. Monday nights, the Les Paul Quartet holds office hours. Sets Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 and 10:30, with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. 9/12–9/17: Charlie Haden & Gerri Allen. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (212-582-2121).*

The Jazz Standard—A sprawling room with terrific sound and the best club menu in the city, the Jazz Standard offers a fresh mix of estimable hard-boppers, jazz greats, and artists on the rise. Mon., Tues., and Fri. at 5:30 and Sat. at 7, guitarist David O'Rourke swings in the upstairs 27 Standard bar. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 8 and 10; Fri. and Sat. at 8,

Performance

Dishing the Dirt

Her world-weary seventies albums laid the craggy foundations for alt-country, but Emmylou Harris (pictured) has also provided inspiration for the likes of downtown funksters Luscious Jackson, with whom she collaborated on their album 'Electric Honey.' September 18–20, the crystalline-voiced country singer takes the stage at Joe's Pub to showcase work from her recently released 'Red Dirt Girl.' (See "Small Stages.")

10:30, and midnight; and Sun. at 7 and 9. $15–$25 cover; $10 minimum. 9/11: Carla White Trio. 9/12–9/17: The Kurt Rosenwinkle Quartet. *116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232).*

Museum of Modern Art—Fridays, in addition to throwing its doors open for pay-what-you-wish night, MOMA also transforms its cafeteria into a (sort of) swinging jazz club. All shows at 5:30. The museum's Sette restaurant offers jazz Thursdays and Saturdays, 6–10. 9/14 and 9/16: Jay D'Amico Duo. *11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-0480).*

Red Blazer—Mondays and Tuesdays: Sam Ulano's Jazz band. Wednesdays: Felix Swing Band; Alan Russell Big Jazz Band. Thursdays: Stan Rubin's Big Swing Band. Fridays: Simon Wettenhall's Oceanic Dixieland Band. Saturdays: Bob Cantwell's Dixie & Swing Band. *32 W. 37th St. (212-947-6428).*

Rose Center—9/15: Mark Whitfield Quartet. *The Rose Center is open until 8:45 P.M. Fridays; suggested admission price is $10 for adults, $7.50 for students and seniors, $6 for children. Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th St., American Museum of Natural History (212-874-3929).*

Showman's Café—Reopened right on 125th Street (though not, unfortunately, in its original location adjacent to the Apollo), the legendary jazz watering hole offers slow-cooked soul-jazz and funkified hard bop every night. No cover; two-drink minimum. *375 E. 125th St. (212-864-8941). $.*

Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. *183 W. 10th St. (212-929-7565).*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. 9/12–9/17: Hamiett Bluett Birthday Week. *88 Seventh Ave. So. (212-242-1785).*

Tonic—Yet another impeccably hip Lower East Side avant-jazzerie, Tonic has its sights set on the Knitting Factory crowd. Sunday: Klezmer Sundays. 9/12: Timo Ellis. 9/13: Lonnie Plaxico Group. 9/14: Neill C. Furio. 9/15: Roy Campbell Trio; Harriet Tubman; Steven Bernstein. 9/16: L.E.G. & B.; "Tonic EMBLAM Super-electro Fiesta 2000." *107 Norfolk St. (212-358-7503). $.*

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30, with a late 1 A.M. set Fri. and Sat. Through 9/17: Tommy Flanagan Trio. *178 Seventh Ave. So. (212-255-4037). $.*

Comedy

Boston Comedy Club—*Animal House* ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Shows Tues.–Thurs. at 9:30; Fri.–Sat. at 8, 10, and midnight. *82 W. 3rd St. (212-477-1000).*

Carolines On Broadway—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. $12.50–$24.50, two-drink minimum. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. 9/12: "The Blue Collar Show." 9/14–9/17: Chuck Nice. 9/14–9/16: Joe Rogan. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (212-757-4100).*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11; Sat. at 9, 10:45, and 12:30 A.M.; and Sun.–Thurs. at 9. *117 MacDougal St. (212-254-3480).*

Comic Strip—Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. *1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (212-861-9386).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11:15; Sat. at 8, 10:30, and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat. ($20 for 10:30 Sat. show), $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (212-593-1650).*

Gotham—A trendy comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Every Tues. and Sun. New Talent Showcase; Wednesdays with Robert Klein. Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30 with a $10 cover; Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30 with a $15 cover. Two-drink minimum. 9/15–9/16: Ted Alexandro; Paul M. Mercurio; Wali Collins. *34 W. 22nd St. (212-367-9000).*

"Spin Cycle Comedy"—Comedy from Danny Cohen and Jodie Wasserman while you separate your whites and colors. Really. *King Size Laundromat, 178 Seventh Ave., at 20th St. (212-501-6016). Free.*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. Shows Sun.–Thurs. at 7 and 9; Fri.–Sat. at 8, 10, and 12:15 A.M. $12 cover. *236 W. 78th St. (212-595-0850).*

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel—The Oak Room hosts some formidable names in its cozy environs. (Early shows Tues.–Sat., late shows Fri. and Sat.) Sundays: The Howard Fishman Quartet. Through 10/16: "Second International Festival of Cabaret" featuring Natalie Gamsu and Michel Hermon. Through 10/14: Maureen McGovern. *59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800).*

Arci's Place—A Murray Hill–area Italian restaurant with an intimate cabaret space. Sundays at 8: Lisa Asher and Jeff Waxman. Mondays at 8: Steven Lutvak. Through 10/15: Karen Mason. *450 Park Ave. So., at 30th St. (212-532-4370).*

Cafe Carlyle—Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band at 8:45. $60. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (212-744-1600).*

Cafe Pierre—Tues.–Sat., singer-pianist Kathleen Landis celebrates her fourteenth year at the Cafe Pierre with a special program called "Fascinating Rhythms: 50 Years of American Popular Song and Jazz." Sun.–Mon., Nancy Winston sings and plays piano. $19 minimum; jacket and tie required. *Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (212-940-8195).*

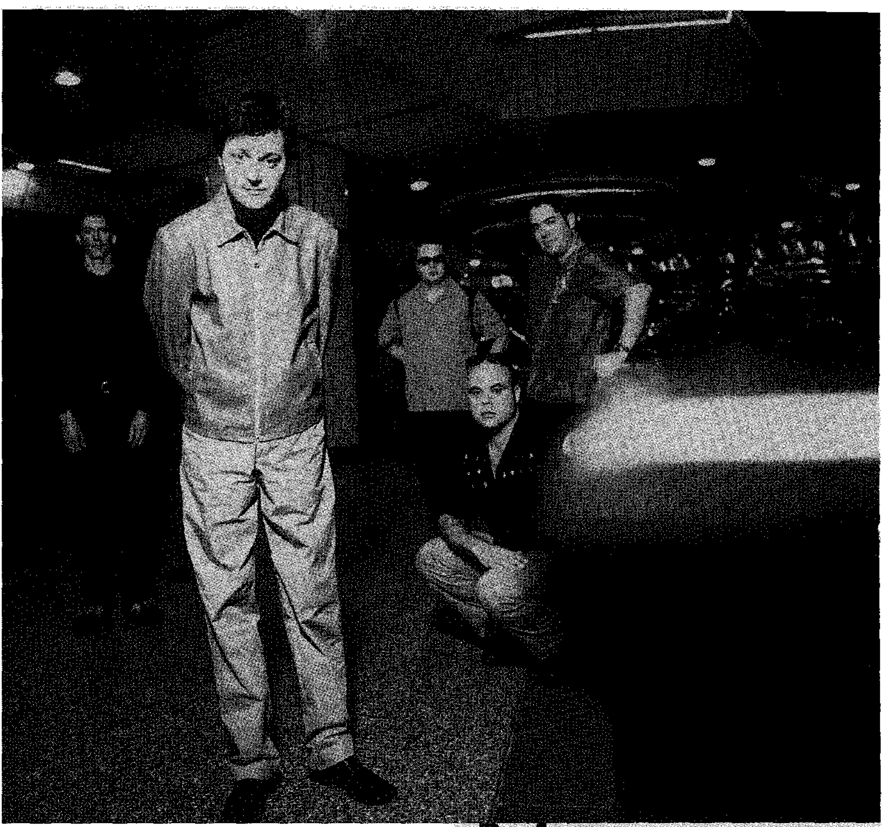
The Carnegie Club at Carnegie Bar and Books—Fridays and Saturdays at 9:30 and 11:00: Sinatra impersonator Cary Hoffman, backed by Stan Rubin's eleven-piece big band. $20 cover; two-drink minimum. *156 W. 56th St. (212-957-9676).*

Don't Tell Mama—What better way to wind down after an evening of overwrought Broadway fare than some understated cabaret? 9/15: "The Nex Big Broadway Musical." 9/16: Celebrity impersonator Tommy Femia presents "Judy Garland Live: That's Entertainment!" *343 W. 46th St. (212 757-0788).*

Feinstein's at the Regency—Michael Feinstein' cabaret space at the Regency Hotel shares the room with the restaurant 540 Park. Tickets are $60; $50 food-and-drink minimum. Through 9/23: Dame Cleo Laine. *540 Park Ave., at 61st St (212-307-4100 or 212-339-4095).*

FireBird Café—The theater district's newest post-show snuggery, right next door to an overwrought Russian restaurant—steer clear of the Cossack-dagger-toting doormen and you'll be fine. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 9; Fri.–Sat. at 9 and 11 $30 cover; $15 minimum. Thursdays, through 9/21: Jackie & Roy. *365 W. 46th St. (212-586-0244).*

Judy's—This cozy and friendly piano bar features two performance spaces, a fine menu, and a weekly gig by Judy herself. 9/11: Anthony Gaglione 9/12: Elizabeth Hodes. *169 Eighth Ave., bet. 18th and 19th Sts. (212-929-5410).*



Performance

Maroon Tunes

Most rockers have had to hitch their stars to hip-hop—or at least its attitude. But Canada's Barenaked Ladies (pictured) have hit the charts by making unabashedly goofy rock. September 16 at Town Hall, they'll perform the ever-so-slightly-more-mature sounds from their new Don Was–produced album *Maroon*.

Photograph by Ralf Strathman

the mix

Amy Bloom...Armory Antiques...Bus Festival

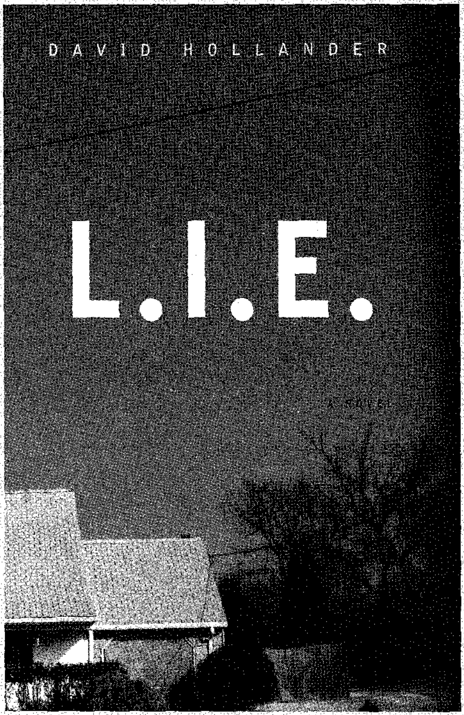
John Leonard's TV Notes

Thin Air (9/12; 8 to 10 P.M.; A&E) is the second TV movie with Joe Mantegna as Robert B. Parker's Boston private eye, Spenser for Hire, and a dreary one it is in spite of combustible materials like a disappearing bride (Yancy Butler); a gunned-down cop (David Ferry); a crazy ghetto warlord (Jon Seda); an empire-building master criminal (Miguel Sandoval) who thinks he's Charlemagne; a temporary substitute for Hawk in the grinning lowlife person of "Chollo" (Luis Guzman); and the usual sexy psychotherapist, Susan Silverman (Marcia Gay Harden), who can be counted on to eat between every shrink-wrapped cliché. A lot seems to be going on, but all of it is listless. At least there's no smart-aleck voice-over.

Inside the Box (9/18; 10:30 to 11 P.M.; Channel 13) is the first in a "Democracy Project" half-hour series in which the vox populi is briefly heard speaking candidly in what seems like one of those three-for-a-dollar photo booths in bus stations. Here, doctors, nurses, patients, and family members talk about everything that's wrong about health care in America, while the camera keeps careening away to wander around in medical facilities in the Seattle area. Strong points are made by intelligent and articulate people but then abandoned without follow-up. Still, it's more interesting than the Sunday-morning pop-up-pundit talk shows.

My Family—Mi Familia (9/17; 9 to 11 P.M.; Channel 13), the Anna Thomas–Gregory Nava film for *American Playhouse* about three generations of Mexican-Americans, stars Jimmy Smits, Esai Morales, Edward James Olmos, Michael DeLorenzo, Jennifer Lopez, and Jenny Gago—not to mention Scott Bakula and Mary Steenburgen—in a slice-of-life extended-family saga that covers everything from Los Angeles racism to radical Catholicism to gang warfare to death in childbirth. Not in the least surprising, but also not in the least shabby—and obviously the prototype for Showtime's terrific dramatic series *Resurrection Boulevard*.

In Print
The Moody Blues



Like the protagonist of his first novel, *L.I.E.*, David Hollander played in a band when he was a teenager. "We were called the Tyrannosaurus Rectums," he says. His literary alter ego, Harlan Kessler, is just out of high school in Bellport, Long Island, and though he's got long hair and a guitar (his hero is Joe Satriani), Kessler is 18 and still a virgin. Or, as Hollander would write, "*eighteen and still a virgin.*" "Anything that has the potential to be an extended metaphor or a trope I put in italics—they're meant to be a reminder that someone is manipulating this, an in-joke for the reader from the writer. No one is getting it," Hollander says cheerfully. "People are writing things like 'Once you get past the experimental trappings, it's really a nice coming-of-age story.' But the experimental trappings are more important to me than the nice coming-of-age story." Among the other things people are writing, and saying, is that Hollander's work owes something to the writing of Rick Moody—to whom *L.I.E.* is dedicated. Though Hollander credits an undergraduate class he took with Moody at SUNY Purchase as the pivotal moment in his career, he doesn't get the comparison. "He writes about the suburbs, and I write about the suburbs, so people are calling me the blue-collar Rick Moody—which I guess makes him the white-collar Rick Moody—but to tell you the truth, I don't see it." Listen for yourself when Hollander reads at the Community Bookstore at 143 Seventh Ave. in Park Slope on September 13 at 7:30 P.M.. ARIEL LEVY

Lectures and Panels

"Sermons in Stone: Cemetery Art/Iconography"—9/12 at 6:30 P.M.: John J. Gallagher, author of *To Save the Nation*, presents a slide show and lecture as part of the "Artist's Personal Adventure" series. Independence Plaza, 310 Greenwich St., second fl. (718-388-2835); $2 suggested donation.

"Volunteering in New York"—9/13 at 6 P.M.: A class geared toward helping New Yorkers become involved in the volunteering community, featuring guests from organizations that deal with children, the homeless, senior citizens, and more. The New School, 66 W. 12th St. (212-229-5682); free.

The Terra-Cotta Tiles of Seaview—9/13 at 6:30 P.M.: A slide show and lecture examining the endangered ceramic murals at Seaview Hospital on Staten Island, their significance and their historical value. The Municipal Art Society, 457 Madison Ave., at 51st St. (212-935-3960); $8; reservations suggested.

Journal/Isms—9/16 from noon to 6:30 P.M. and 9/17 from noon to 3:30 P.M.: A series of three round-table discussions on the periodical's role as a critical forum for writing on the visual arts, bringing together international editors, writers, academics, designers, and artists to discuss the present and future state of journalism and the arts. Swiss Institute, 495 Broadway, third fl. (212-025-2035); free.

The Written Word

Billy Collins and Sophie Cabot Black—9/12 at 7 P.M.: Reading from their works at Russian Samovar, 256 W. 52nd St. (212-872-1678); $3.

Jonathan Ames, Akhil Sharma, and Rachel Resnick—9/13 at 8 P.M.: Reading from their works *What's Not to Love: The Adventures of a Mildly Perverted Young Writer, An Obedient Father*, and *Go West Young F**ed-Up Chick*, respectively. The National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park So. (212-592-4648); free; jacket required.

Priscilla Rattazzi—9/14 at 6 P.M.: A book signing of the photographer's new book of images, *Georgica Pond*, at Corner Bookstore, 1313 Madison Ave., at 93rd St. (212-831-3554); free.

Amy Bloom—9/14 at 7 P.M.: Reading from her new book of short stories, *A Blind Man Can See How Much I Love You*, at Three Lives & Company, 154 W. 10th St. (212-741-2069); free.

Rebecca Goldstein—9/14 at 7:30 P.M.: Reading from her new novel, *Properties of Light: A Novel of Love, Betrayal, and Quantum Physics*, at Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (212-362-8835); free.

"Relative Memory: Writers Remember Their Roots"—9/17 at 3 P.M.: Andre Aciman, Douglas Century, Johanna Kaplan, and Jonathan Rosen will read stories about their grandparents and discuss literary and familial legacies. The Eldridge Street Synagogue, 12 Eldridge St. (212-978-8800); $6, $4 students and seniors.

Ben Sherwood—9/18 at 7:30 P.M.: Book signing and reading from his newest novel, *The Man Who Ate the 747*, at Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (212-362-8835); free.

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Happening
Street Fare

Starting September 14, the annual eleven-day Feast of San Gennaro pays tribute to the patron saint of Naples with game booths, live music (the songs of Sinatra feature prominently), and so many cannolis that no one will be able to dance. On Mulberry Street between Canal and Houston; call 212-768-9320 for more information.

Pisk—9/18 at 8 P.M.: Deb Black hosts the Jewish Museum's first *pisk* (Yiddish for "bigmouth") of the season, with a poetry slam and music. CB's Gallery Downstairs, 313 Bowery (212-580-0099, ext. 204); $5.

Paul Auster and Dave Isay—9/18 at 6 P.M.: Reading from *Flophouse: Life on the Bowery.* 227 Bowery (212-674-3456); free.

Tours

Flower Market Tour—9/12 at 9 A.M.: A three-hour walking tour focusing on the vendors and merchants of Manhattan's flower district, with discussion of wholesale pricing structures and the cut-flower and foliage selection. Meet in front of the McDonald's at Sixth Ave. and 28th St. (212-757-0915, ext. 200); $45.

Literary Garrets of Greenwich Village—9/16 at 2 P.M.: A walking tour of New York's downtown neighborhood focusing on its famous past literary residents, with stops at the homes of or sites associated with Edgar Allan Poe, e.e. cummings, Theodore Dreiser, etc. Meet in front of the Jefferson Market Library at Sixth Ave. and 10th St. (718-591-4741); $12.

Forever Fashionable Flatiron—9/16 at 2 P.M.: A tour of one of the hottest shopping areas in the city, exploring the architecture of the nineteenth-century buildings and tracing the development of the neighborhood. Meet in front of the Flatiron Building at the intersection of Broadway, Fifth Ave., and 23rd St. (212-969-8262); $10.

Upper West Side Walking Tour—9/17 at 2 P.M.: A tour focusing on the history and architecture of the district, with stops at the largest mansion built in Manhattan, an "old law tenement," and sites associated with Dorothy Parker, Babe Ruth, and Edgar Allan Poe. Meet at the southeast corner of 70th St. and Broadway; $10.

Benefits

Opening Night at City Opera—9/12 at 5:30 P.M.: A gala evening featuring cocktails on the Grand Promenade, a performance of *Roberto Devereux,* a salute to Murray H. Bring, dinner, and dancing to the Peter Duchin Orchestra, to benefit the New York City Opera. New York State Theater, 20 Lincoln Center, 63rd St. and Broadway (212-870-4235); tickets $500–$2,500, tables $5,000–$25,000.

"Dinner by the Sea"—9/14 at 6 P.M.: An evening featuring cocktails, dinner, dancing, and a dolphin show to benefit the Pre-K-through-twelfth-grade programs offered by the New York Aquarium and to honor the recipients of this year's Conservation and Distinguished Leadership Awards. The New York Aquarium, Surf Ave. at W. 8th St., Brooklyn (718-265-3427); tickets $300, tables $3,000–$10,000.

Race for the Cure Benefit—9/14 at 6:30 P.M.: A wine tasting with live jazz music to celebrate the Pink Lights Brigade, a week when New York City's landmark buildings color their lights pink in support of breast-cancer awareness and the Race for the Cure, with all proceeds to benefit the Greater New York Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. Steubens flagship store, 667 Madison Ave., at 61st St. (212-606-0532); $40.

Battle-Top Benefit—9/16 from 9 A.M. to 6 P.M.: A video-game play-off between professional game players and celebrities (including MTV V.J.'s Ray and KK and Lillo Brancato of *The Sopranos*) to benefit Safe Horizon, an organization geared toward preventing domestic violence. X-S on Times Square, 1457 Broadway, bet. 41st and 42nd Sts. (858-677-9026); free.

New Yorkers for Children Family Sports Day 2000—9/17 from 4 P.M. to 7 P.M.: An interactive afternoon for children and their families along with major athletes, area sports teams, corporations, and celebrities featuring soccer, gymnastics, wall-climbing, face-painting, and a sports-themed live auction, to benefit NYFC, an organization helping New York's children in foster homes. The Field House, Chelsea Piers, W. 23rd St. at the Hudson River (212-921-9070); $125 adults, $50 children.

Events

New York Armory Antiques Show—9/13, 4–9 P.M.; 9/14–9/16, noon–9 P.M.; 9/17, noon–6 P.M.: The first major antiques show of the season, featuring 100 prominent international dealers covering 5,000 years of antiquities including rugs, maps, rare books, jewelry, paintings, tapestries, and more. The Seventh Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 67th St. (212-472-1180); $10.

Eighth Annual Bus Festival—9/16 from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.: The New York Transit Museum hosts a celebration featuring a display of historic buses from the early 1900s to the present, horse-drawn omnibus rides, live entertainment, and creative workshops for children. Schermerhorn St. bet. Boerum Pl. and Court St., Brooklyn (718-243-8601); free.

Autumn in the Winter Garden—Through 11/30: Featuring exhibits, workshops, and performances in arts ranging from dance to classical music to an all-clown circus. 9/12 and 9/19: Open rehearsals of the Alice Farley Dance Theater's production of Black Fire. 9/14: A lecture by Alice Farley about her performance process and her signature sculptural costumes. On display through 9/24: "Sticks, Tags, and Strings: The Art of Contemporary Puppetry." Various locations in the World Financial Center, 250 Vesey St. (212-945-0505); free.

Exhibitions

"A Refugee Camp in the Heart of the City"—9/15 and 9/16 from 9:30 A.M. to 6:30 P.M.: Doctors Without Borders presents an interactive, outdoor 7,000-square-foot reconstruction of a refugee camp, in an effort to raise awareness about the state of refugees worldwide. Returned volunteers act as guides to those visiting the site, and parallel lectures, exhibitions, forums, and events will be taking place throughout the city all week long. Through 9/28: "Exiled at Home and Abroad: The Kosovo Crisis." 9/14: "What Is Medecins Sans Frontières?" 9/14: "The Changing Nature of Humanitarian Crises." 9/15: "The Refugee Experience in the United States: Restoring Fairness to the Asylum Process." 9/16: "The Refugee Experience: In Flight and in the Heart of America." Cherry Hill in Central Park at 72nd St.; call for locations of other events (212-655-3793); free; event prices vary.

Inventing the Skyline: The Architecture of Cass Gilbert—9/12–1/21 from 11 A.M. to 6 P.M.: The New-York Historical Society hosts an exhibit exploring the work of American architect Cass Gilbert, designer of the U.S. Custom House at Bowling Green, the Woolworth Building, and the U.S. Army Supply Base in Brooklyn. Items on display range from conceptual sketches to completed blueprints, and an accompanying catalogue will also be available. The New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park West (212-873-3400); suggested donation of $5, $3 students and seniors.

"50 Books/50 Covers"—Through 9/29 from 11 A.M. to 6 P.M.: Since 1923, the American Institute of Graphic Arts has recognized excellence in book and book-cover design in various types of publications, ranging from fiction to reference, through its yearly competition. This year, the 50 winning designs of 2000, chosen out of more than 900 en-

GAME WEEK

HOME ▨ **AWAY** ▨

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
GIANTS							CHI FOX 4:15 P.M.
JETS	NE ABC 9 P.M.						BUF CBS 1 P.M.
YANKEES	BOS MSG 6:05 P.M.	TOR MSG 7:05 P.M.	TOR MSG 7:05 P.M.	TOR FOX 7:05 P.M.	CLE FOX 7:05 P.M.	CLE FOX 1:05 P.M.	CLE MSG 1:05 P.M.
METS	MIL FSNY 7:10 P.M.	MIL FSNY 7:10 P.M.	MIL WPIX 1:10 P.M.	MON FSNY 7:05 P.M.	MON FSNY 7:05 P.M.	MON FSNY 7:05 P.M.	MON FSNY 1:35 P.M.
METROSTARS					TBA MSG 8 P.M.		
	9/11	9/12	9/13	9/14	9/15	9/16	9/17

Photograph by Russ MacKechnie.

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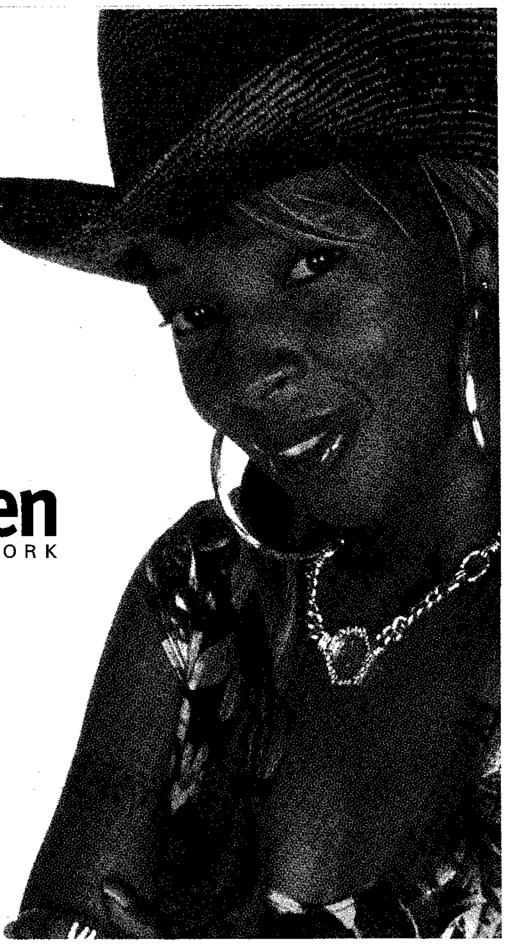

to last week's puzzles

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Photograph by Michael Gibson.

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Children's Events

Lunch Time—Learn everything there is to know about school lunch. Sponsored by the **NY FOOD MUSEUM**, which creates exhibits for existing spaces. The display is set up on the Staten Island side of the Ferry Terminal and runs through the end of October. For more information, call 212-966-0191.●

Snack Time—**ONCE UPON A TART**, an eight-year-old bakery-café in SoHo, has put together a collection of tin lunch boxes filled with sweet school-related treats. It's open every day. On 9/18, the bakers begin cooking lessons for kids. The $75 class fee is translated into a donation to the Sharing Foundation, an organization that helps orphaned Cambodians. At 135 Sullivan St. (212-387-8869).●

Kids in Nature—Toddlers love to explore new surroundings. Pump up that volume with a chance to explore the world of nature at **ALLEY POND ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER**. Take short nature walks, pet some friendly animals, read stories, and create nature crafts in a seven-week course that begins 9/14 and runs every Thursday from 12:45 to 2 P.M. For ages 24 months through 35 months. Cost is $105. Call 718-229-4000 to register. At 228-06 Northern Blvd., Douglaston.●

Puppet Festival—International puppet troupes performing both new and classic works will appear at the **2000 HENSON INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF PUPPET THEATER** through 9/24 on sixteen stages around Manhattan. While many of the performances are for grown-ups only, there are twelve shows that are appropriate for families. They include: the fairy tale "Hollebollebeer" from the Netherlands, China's Yang Feng and his acrobatic puppets, Cuba's "The Girl Who Watered Basil and the Nosy Prince," and two American troupes who perform "Simple Gifts" and "Sleeping Beauty." The children's dance group Batoto Yetu will also collaborate with another American puppeteer from 9/15 to 9/24 to perform "The Mukishi" at the New Victory Theater. Ticket prices vary. For information on all shows, call 212-279-4200 or www.hensonfestival.org.

"Animal Art"—Gracing many of the city's parks and playgrounds is animal artwork. Through the use of drawings, photographs, and models, the **PARKS DEPARTMENT** set up a free exhibit at the Arsenal that highlights the variety of decorative animal elements throughout the city. Included are: the eagle at Star Spangled Playground in Brooklyn, the coyote at Van Cortlandt Park, and dinosaurs at Flushing Meadow. Gallery hours are Monday through Friday from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. The exhibit runs through Oct. 19. At the Arsenal Gallery, third floor, just inside Central Park at 64th Street and Fifth Ave. (212-360-8163).●

Nocturnal Additions—Discover the fascinating world of animals who come out to play in the midnight hour. **CREATURES OF THE NIGHT** is a family science workshop where kids can explore the night moves of owls, frogs, bats, raccoons, worms, crickets, and more. 9/16–17, from 1 to 4 P.M. at the Brooklyn Children's Museum, 145 Brooklyn Ave. (718-735-4400).●

Lollypop Playhouse—Live actors, audience participation, and no mean stepparents or negative stereotypes at Miss Majesty's Lollypop Playhouse in the Village. Every Saturday and Sunday, now through Nov. 19, is **THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD** at 1:30 P.M. and **THE LITTLEST MERMAID** at 3:30 P.M. Tickets are $8.50. Call 212-741-6436 for reservations. At 39 Grove St.

Teen Angst—**MIDDLE FINGER**, a new play by the Ma-Yi Theater Company, follows the lives of Jacob Rodriguez and Benjamin Lunga, two Filipino-American teens in a strictly traditional Catholic boys' school. Opens 9/14 at the Blue Heron Arts Center. Tickets are $19. Performances are Tuesday through Saturday at 7 P.M., Saturday and Sunday at 2 P.M. At 123 E. 24th St. (212-581-8896).

Busses for Buses—Brooklyn's Schermerhorn Street is once again magically transformed into Memory Lane as the annual cavalcade of historic buses rolls up to the **NEW YORK TRANSIT MUSEUM** on 9/16, from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. Some of the buses date back to the early 1900s. Also on display will be the "Jackie Gleason" bus. The day includes an art workshop to design your own miniature version as well as an appearance by Nick Jr.'s Maisy, to promote her new book *Maisy Drives the Bus*. Admission is $5, seniors and kids $2. At the corner of Boerum Place and Schermerhorn Street (718-243-8601).●

For Kids With Special Needs—The **HECKSCHER MUSEUM OF ART** sponsors a family program for pre-k and kindergarten children with special needs on 9/17, from 11 A.M. to noon. A special-education teacher reads a story and then guides the participants through related art activities. Admission is $3 per family. Registration is required. At Heckscher Park, Main St. (Route 25A) and Prime Ave. in Huntington Village (631-351-3250).

cue

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Happening

Nothing But Hairnet

First, there was the *ewwww* factor. An exhibit on school lunch? I pictured zaftig, humorless matrons scooping brown glop onto even browner trays. Then I remembered that uniquely sour cafeteria odor that never changes, decade after decade. This is exhibit-worthy? And though the NY Food Museum chose a location as similar to a dank, acoustically challenged school cafeteria as it could find—the Staten Island Ferry Terminal—I still couldn't imagine what would fill it. (Tater Tots, maybe?) Director Nancy Ralph set me straight. "School lunch has always been a political issue," she explains. "Remember when President Reagan reclassified school lunch to cut the budget and decided ketchup was a vegetable?" To that end, and in honor of the 27 million schoolkids served lunch every day in this country (655,600 of those in New York City), designer Peter Melville put together this five-panel showcase of photos, text, and trays that depicts the history of school-cafeteria cuisine, starting in the early 1900s. "When the National School Lunch Act become permanent in 1946, some supported it as a farm bill, some supported it as an education measure, and some as a defense measure, since almost half of all the World War II recruits flunked the physical because of nutrition problems," Ralph continues. "Now the hotbed issue is privatizing school lunches and the legality of vending machines in public schools." The exhibit, which is set up on the Staten Island side, runs through October 31. Get in one line, and move quickly. *Next!* (See "Children's Events.") **SUSAN AVERY**

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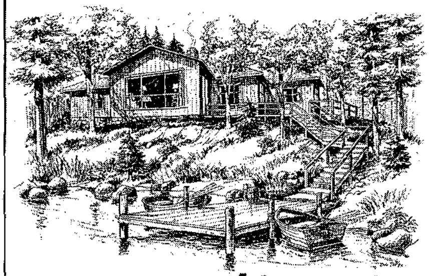

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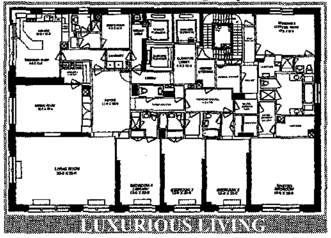

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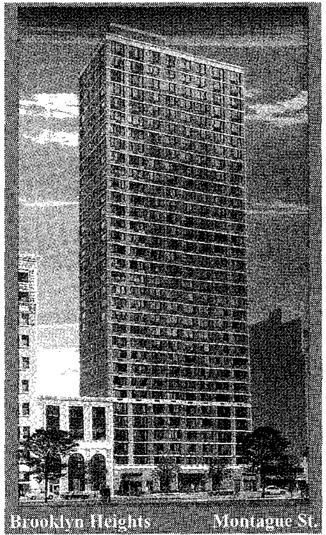

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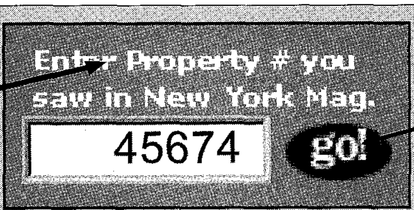

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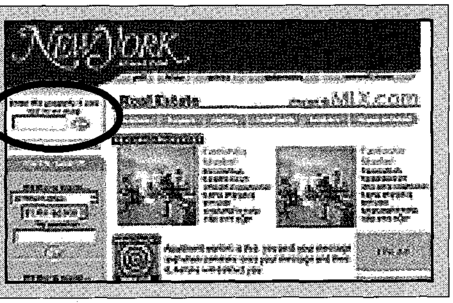

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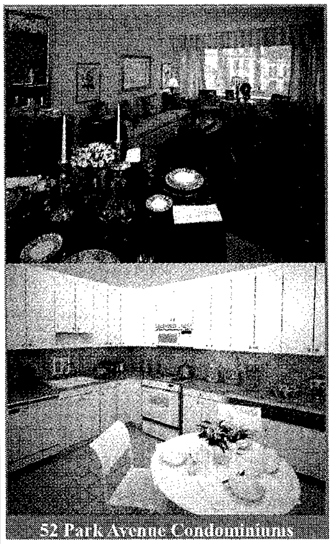

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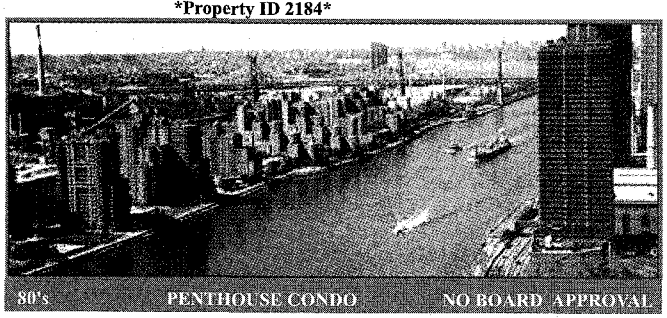

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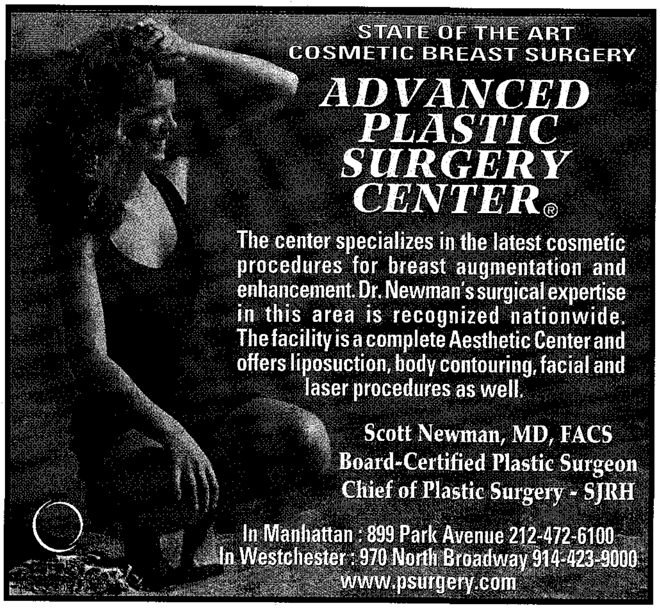

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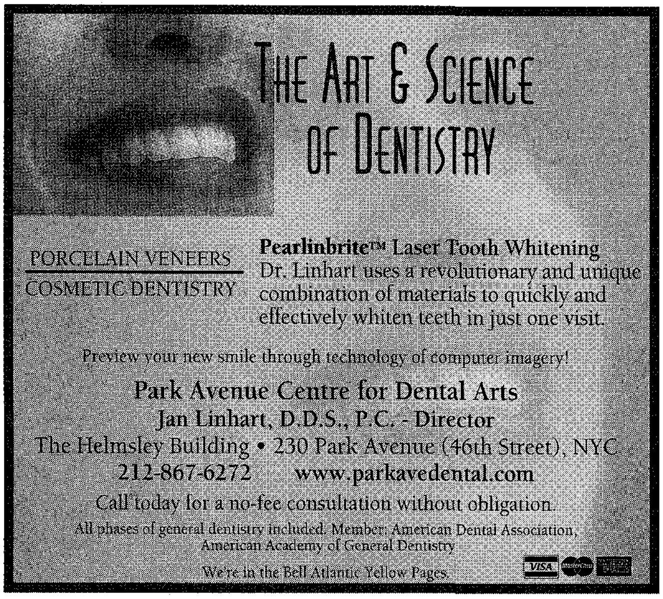

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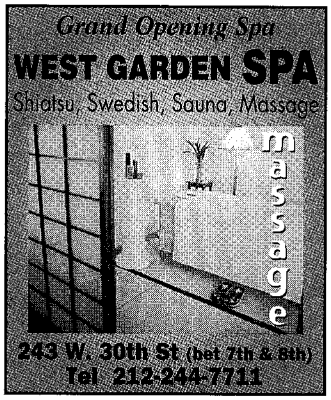

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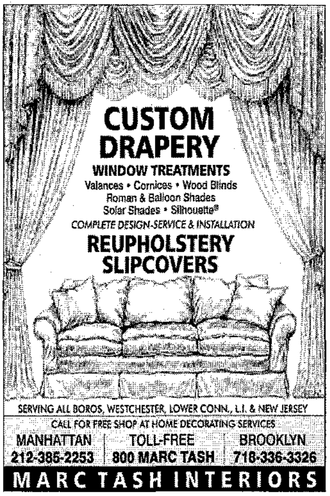
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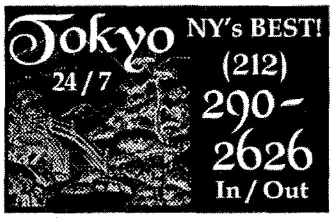
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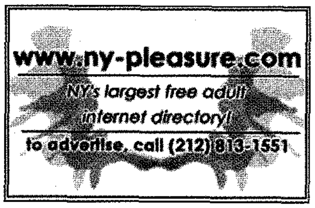
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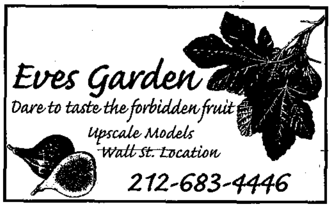
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Cut Above—Seductive, desirable male PhD, 62, seeks leggy lady. Photo. 5202 ✉

Relationship-Minded Male—Seek bright, attractive, affectionate and healthy nonsmoking female. I am a divorce Jewish businessman, unpretentious I enjoy sports, movies. Note/photo.5215 ✉

You Won't Be Sorry—Wealthy young-40s business owner seeks fun well-balanced, very attractive femal partner. I have three great young children enjoy life, love the beach and doing stuf You should be 5'4" or shorter, Jewish secure, enjoy children and life. Note photo, please. 5193 ✉

Loves To Laugh—56, youthful, pretty cultured, warm and compassionate, grea communicator, country/city lover, seek easygoing, energetic, romantic man wh enjoys life. Sense of humor and emo tionally secure. Nonsmoker. Note/photo E-mail: eb2569@aol.com. 5173 ✉

Are You Warm, Loving And Optimistic?–I am. Successful attorney, 74, widowe after 41 years of happy marriage, with tw children and six grandchildren, active involved in Israel and Jewish philanthrop seeks very intelligent and well-educate happy, affectionate and loving, young-a heart partner in her 60s, who is Jewish involved and who desires closeness, con panionship and commitment, to enjoy li together - including family, travel, oper movies, music, theater, etc. Please reply detail and enclose a recent photo. 5159✉

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SEND

A WRITTEN RESPONSE
Here's How:

STRICTLY PERSONALS
New York Magazine, Box # ______
P.O. Box 4600
New York, New York 10163-4600

etty, Petite Blond—Loves laughter, e arts, travel, bicycling and ballom dancing. Seeking a man, 47-60, r a committed relationship. Note/oto, please. 5171 ✉

etty, Prep-Schooled Sweetie—Petite, apely, divorced Jewish female, late 40s, th Master's degree. I enjoy tennis, golf, oking, cozy evenings, stock market, ow tunes and nurturing a relationship. eking a Jewish male, kindhearted, tient, established, who values the eetness of life and is ready for a ing, loyal life together. Any geographic ea. Letter/photo, please. 5199 ✉

on't Wait - Be The First To Respond!!—am a professional man in his 50s, 5'10", wish. My mother thinks I'm the best ng since sliced bread. I want to meet a oman who is intelligent, attractive, rious, exciting, has a sense of humor d loves NYC, in her 40s. The partner I hoping to meet is one who wants to plore the many things life has to offer. lo! The trip should be great! I live with o women on the West Side - one dog almost two, the other eight months old. okers okay. Waiting to hear from you. tter/photo appreciated. 5194 ✉ ☎

telligent, Attractive, Easygoing—vish man, 60, 5'10", trim, very pleasing, t hard up, not neurotic, financially okay, th varied interests, seeks intelligent, ractive, petite woman, 50-55, with om he can enjoy all that NYC offers... d who won't try to change him too ch. Photo preferred. 5170 ✉

ay Wasp Female, 51—Business ofessional - seeks similar with no ggage, addictions or dependencies, d ready for that emotional free fall. e adventure will begin with your note d phone number. 5200 ✉

ll And Handsome—North Shore, LI, ccessful entrepreneur, youthful 55, otionally and financially secure, seeks bright, very pretty, slender, intelligent nale (to age 49), with warmth, charm d a sense of self, and a need to balance life with the right male counterpart. cent photo, please. 5210 ✉

xy, Petite Brunette—50s, with great le and flair, very pretty, enthusiastic and ppy, desires one special man with a se of humor and strong character, who ows how to communicate. I want to re good times and have fun with you. oto, please. 5172 ✉

Looking For Mr. Right—Not Mr. Tonight. This attractive, successful, fun-loving, New Jersey professional woman, 5'9" and in her 30s, seeks her perfect man. I love the beach, great conversations, hanging with friends... You're tall, dark and handsome (of course), love to travel (as do I), are funny, outgoing, kind, honest, intelligent, successful, active, Jewish, fun-loving and smart. Dazzle me with your words of wit! Photo too, please! 5207 ✉

Pretty Jersey Girl—43, Irish-Catholic, slim, outgoing personality, seeks handsome male with a heart of gold, 40-50. Note/photo. 5213 ✉

Are You Up To The Challenge—Of an enticing woman? Dynamic redhead executive seeks 58-68 Homo sapiens for walk into the future. 5198 ✉ ☎

Attractive, Sincere, Retired—European female doctor, diverse interests, seeks caring, humorous, intelligent, man, 68-72, for friendship and companionship - could be a resident of the tri-state area. 5223 ✉

No Angel—Down-to-earth woman, 50ish, sense of humor, eclectic interests, warm, attractive, intelligent, in search of middle-aged man with warmth, humor and ability to give and take. NYC/Bergen and Essex County preferred. 5203 ✉ ☎

Autumn Is For Lovers!—Single white male seeks autumn goddess, 26-33, for sharing crisp fall days in the Park and evenings by the fireplace. Please respond if you look and feel great in a sweater, or find the smell of burning leaves enchanting. Trim, handsome, 41, 6'1", affluent executive with no baggage is available for chauffeuring you through the country roads on weekends. Note and photo, please. 5219 ✉

Fly The Skies—Sail the seas, ski the slopes. Enjoy opera, theater and intelligent conversation. I'm a successful entrepreneur, Oxford University MA, pilot/skipper/skier, handsome, warm and open to new ideas. You are 45 plus, gorgeous, glorious, passionate, seeking adventure and commitment. We are intelligent, cultured - a partnership. Let's talk. 5156 ✉ ☎

Nordic Goddess Wanted!—Scandinavian investment banker, 6'1", 41, seeks feminine tomboy, 27-33. I'm well-educated, adventurous, young-at-heart, attractive and very fit. You have a lust for life, an appreciation of simple pleasures and can gracefully handle being incredibly spoiled. Note and photo, please. 5185 ✉

Professional Man—College grad, 5'10", 162 lbs, 60, divorced, seeks slim, pretty woman, 40-55, to share NYC, theater and dining pleasures. Note/photo. 5224 ✉

The Holidays Are Coming—Love is in the air! Lovable and huggable, adventurous and happy-go-lucky guy, 56, seeks a pretty, calm woman, children a plus. Letter and photo a must. 5188 ✉

Attractive Financial White Widower—Secure, fit, athletic, 62, 5'8", wide interests, seeks attractive woman for long-term, caring relationship. Photo appreciated. 5209 ✉

Fall Preview Clarification

Page 261 of our **Fall Preview Issue**

didn't have our usual response icons

for **MAIL** (✉) for **PHONE** (☎)

Here's how you break the code to respond to these ads:

If only the letter **N** follows the box number, you can only respond by mail

Box numbers followed by the letters **N** and **P** will take both mail and phone responses.

N = MAIL RESPONSE (✉)

P= PHONE RESPONSE (☎)

We're sorry for any inconvenience.

NJ Gal—54, divorced and Jewish, with a sense of humor. Director position with pharmaceutical company. Rx for fun includes opera, ballet, working out, movies, trips into NYC. Looking to meet Jewish male, 48-60, successful professional, direct, honest, for healthy relationship. Nonsmoker. 5220 ✉

Avid Skier—Blue-eyed blond with beauty and brains seeks exceptional man/soul mate. You are 38-55, successful and worldly yet down-to-earth, very athletic, love the outdoors, skiing the west as well as enjoying NYC...ready for romance and commitment. Photo/note, please. 5165 ✉ ☎

Are You Ready—To see if we're meant to be? Educated, very attractive woman, 52, good shape, 5'7", blond hair, blue eyes. Single mom to wonderful little girl. Seeking man who has a heart big enough for two. 5201 ✉ ☎

Russian, Beautiful—30, 5'5", 130 lbs. Blue eyes, blond, kind and soft. Wants to make happy her future husband. 5180 ✉ ☎

Black-Haired Beauty—With grace and charm, seeks good-looking man who is intelligent, interesting and loves to have a best friend for a lover. Be 5'10" or over, 45-60. 5211 ✉ ☎

North Shore Beauty—Long hair, slim, athletic, teacher and mom, seeks relationship with handsome, successful, secure Jewish man, 45-55. Note/photo. 5175 ✉

Handsome Jewish Businessman—41, 6', fit, NJ, seeks slim, pretty Jewish female, 25-38, for shared life. Photo. 5222 ✉

Nice, Slim, Handsome—Jewish periodontist, 45, 5'10", seeks educated, thoughtful woman with a lively mind and passionate heart, 30-40. 5218 ✉ ☎

Respond!!

Some of New York's most interesting people can be found on these pages.
It's so easy to get in touch with them. Drop them a line and send it to:

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Strictly Personals

Wall Street With Soul—Successful, attractive Asian female, 35. Joie de vivre. Loves history, politics, adventure and travel. I'm attracted to men who like intellectually inclined women and are looking for their soul mate. If you are 33-45, successful, well-educated, upbeat thinker with a kind heart, humor, passion and sensitivity towards other civilizations, let's meet... I want to share my side of the adventure with yours...now and possibly forever. nishapur2000@yahoo.com 5160 ☒☎

Special Man, 58—Fun and attractive, seeks woman equal or better to 49 3/4. Note/photo please. 5221 ☒

Share Your Life—With a gifted, creative man. Allow me to inspire you, to ease your hectic pace. Let's make time to discover each other, gradually, gently and with passion. I'm aware, keen-minded, a known designer/sculptor - healthy, fit, playful, appealing, late 50s. Seeking a female companion, 40s-50s, intuitive, bright, fit, lively, a creative eye. 5197 ☒

Single Jewish Female—Striking, intelligent, artistic, late 40s, relocating, seeks quality male. POB 620746, Newton, MA 02462

Life Is Beautiful And The Table Set—Caring, considerate, educated, enthusiastic family man, 55-63, wanted for this cultured, energetic, beautiful widow. 5177☒☎

Attractive, Trim, Energetic—42-year-old, 5'1", Italian-American, single female, pediatrician; enjoys old movies, dancing, music and city life. Seeking fun, charming professional man, 38-46. Note/photo. 5204 ☒

Smart, Beautiful, Charming—Classy, articulate brunette, pushing 40, 5'3", size 6, stuck "out west" as popular university professor, multitalented artist, actor, lecturer; loves music, opera, theater, film, skiing, travel. Wants soul mate to share my zest for life. Only bright, sophisticated, successful guys need apply. 5181☒

Pretty, Warm, Spirited—Happy, quality, accomplished Jewish professional, 5'6", fit, very youthful early 50s, filled with life, love and laughter - kind, caring, sensitive and spiritual. Seeks soul mate. 5189 ☒☎

Witty, Wise, Warm, Well-Dressed—Woman, accomplished, Manhattan resident, seeks 45-65, lively, creative, sophisticated male companion. 5191 ☒☎

Asian Beauty—MD, dancer, A to Z interests - globe-trotter; high energy/intellect; passionate/romantic; sweet/loving. Seeks similar, handsome prince (37-48) for marriage/kids. 5208 ☒☎

Looking For A Lady—With great legs and a sense of humor. I am 59 years old, 5'11", 180 lbs. Photo a must. 5167 ☒

Gay Woman Seeks Collaborative Lover—(Pretty, slim, fit), 48-52, to share professional passion for writing, art and creative dialog, with romance and humor. E-mail: san913dy@aol.com 5205 ☒

One Good Man—In search of several good women (just kidding!). Earthy, attractive Jewish male, starting fifth decade, good-hearted, well-educated, with diverse interests, seeks contact and connection with upbeat, spontaneous, tall woman with engaging smile, sexy demeanor, independent yet intimate. If you catalyze the best in others, are ready and open for a relationship, value friends and family, and have a good moral compass, please respond with a nongeneric note and recent photo. 5184☒

Vibrant Westchester Widow—Pretty, elegant blond, fit, shapely, loving, cultured, sensual, 60s, seeks romantic, upscale, youthful 68-plus man to share in life/interests, golf, outdoors, the arts, travel. Humor a must. Family-oriented. Note/photo. 5195 ☒

European—Wall Street professional (but not type), not bad-looking but interesting, athletic - seeks classy, slim, romantic lady, 40-46, who is unpretentious, sexy and warm (do I ask for too much?). Recent photo/note. 5154 ☒

Fun, Fit Female MD—29, 5'7", sli
African-American, enjoys dancing, dinin
laughing, living. Seeks fit mal
30s, career, who is ready for seriou
relationship. Photo! 5163 ☒

Sophisticated, Witty, Lovely, Smart–
Accomplished, professional Jewish woma
seeks caring, capable man, 5'10" plu
50-60 years young. Sense of humor
plus. Photo. 5214 ☒ ☎

Refined, Cultured, Sophisticated–
Financially secure, beautiful Jewish wido
60ish, young-looking, high energy, diver
interests, nonsmoker, seeks same
gentleman for concerts, dining, museum
enjoying the city - for companionshi
romance. Photo, please. 5196 ☒

Male, 45—Sensitive, intelligen
emotionally in-touch, communicativ
great sense of humor - seeks a woma
with similar qualities. 5212 ☒

Handsome, Intelligent, Athletic–
Jewish, 39, 6'2", MBA, Wall Stre
professional. I am caring, romantic an
have a good sense of humor. Seeking ve
pretty, slim Jewish woman, 25-35, brigh
warm and unpretentious. Photo. 5157 ☒

Attractive Professional Male—53, f
likes outdoors, movies, travel. Seek
Christian lady, 35-45. Photo. 5045 ☒☎

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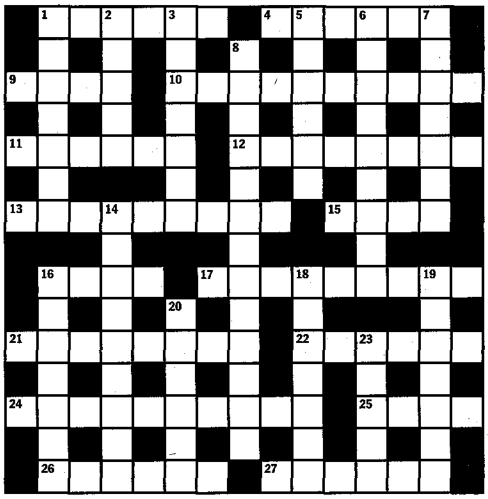
The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS

1 Space traveller, when round the bend . . . (6)
4 . . . provides a remote display. (6)
9 Deer takes one for a ride. (4)
10 Furtively probed deer trail. (4,6)
11 Food and drink taken in ancient France, mostly. (6)
12 Remain out of sight, as a duvet might? (4,4)
13 Type of fungus that strengthens wood. (9)
15 Ruth's heartless devotion. (4)
16 Betty tours north Austrian port. (4)
17 Showing signs of cold, boy indicates imminent departure. (4,5)
21 Mark is drawn into accident in the chase. (4,4)
22 Supply good man leaving Midlands town. (6)
24 Permission to seal off source of hallucinogenic drug. (7,3)
25 Strange echo from where missiles are launched locally? (4)
26 Northerner about to travel across the snow back 'ome. (6)
27 So, the Irish lad's around to spice things up! (6)



DOWN

1 Theatre containing alternative accommodation. (7)
2 For an art patron, acquiring a bit c sculpture makes sense. (5)
3 Soldiers suspect this defensive position. (7)
5 Setter has pound note raised for badge. (6)
6 "This drug is awful," he repined. (
7 Control a habit that's easily gained. (7)
8 Feathers adhere to a skewer. (8,5)
14 Plant found in bog that's socially acceptable to European. (9)
16 Athenian found in the French network. (7)
18 Ideal president in tree fell climbing. (7)
19 Deserve to apprehend the nature c pottery. (7)
20 Mother supporting unruly scout's general behaviour. (6)
23 Female's waste of silky fibres. (5)

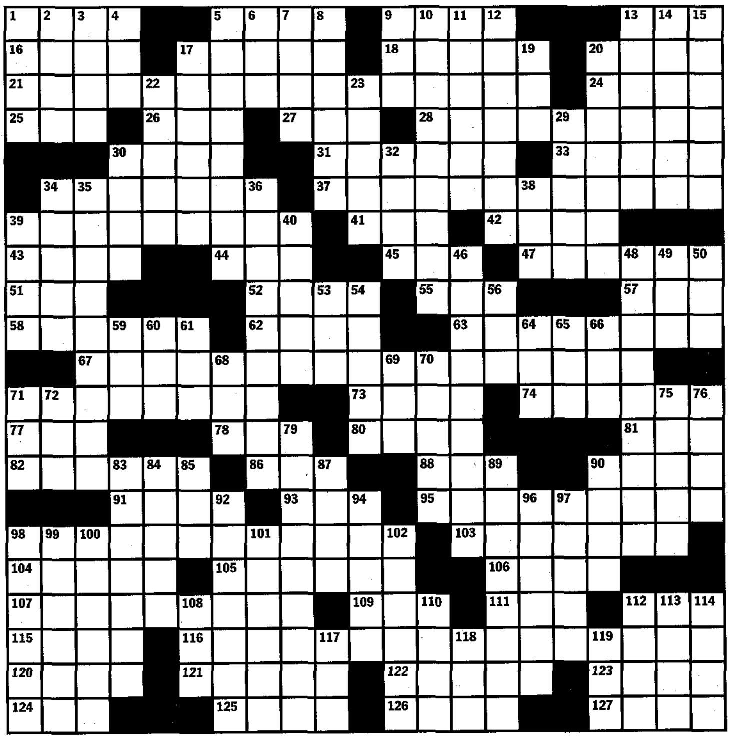
'Olympics Oddities': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS

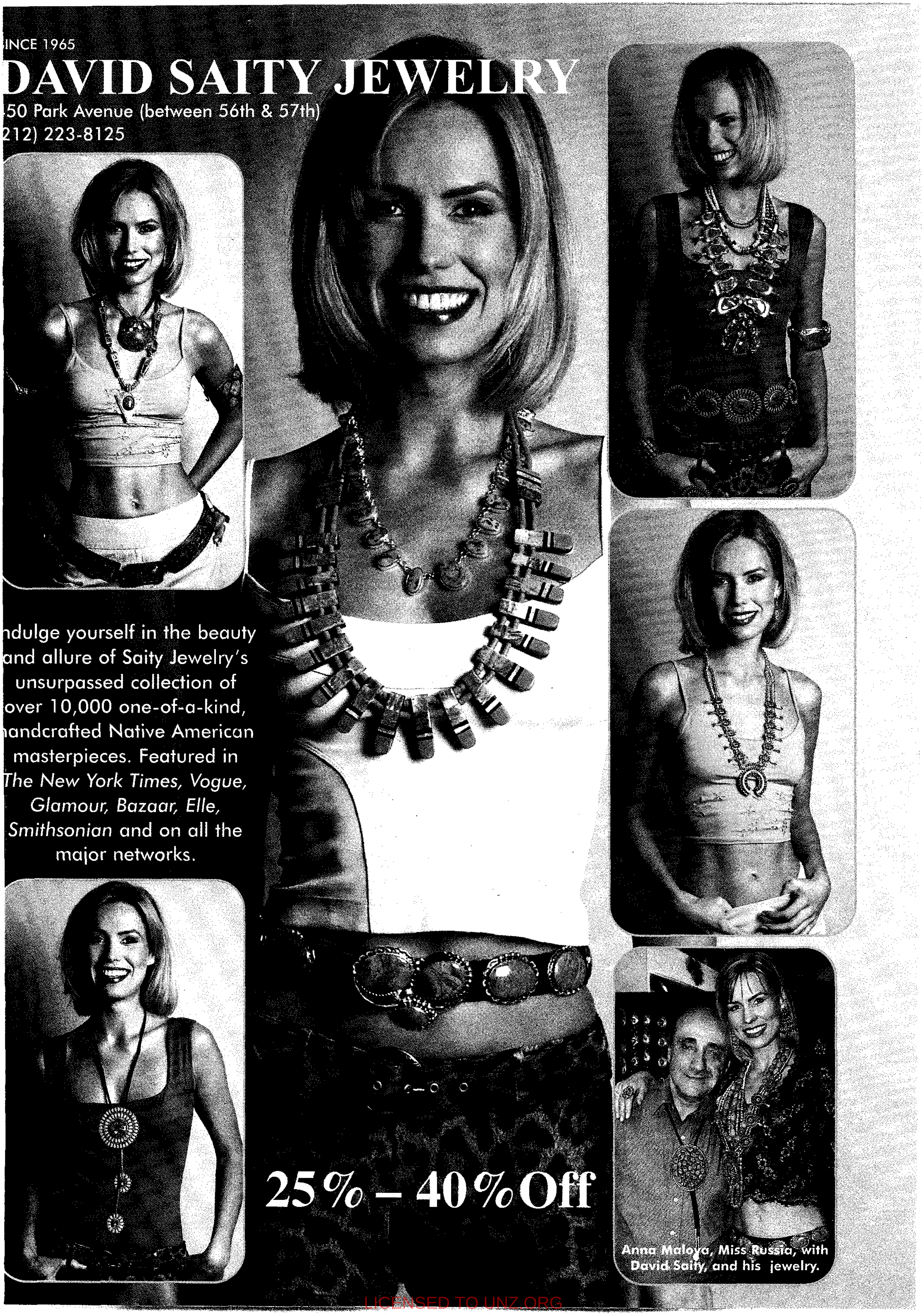
1 Dixieland music
5 Old geezer
9 Part of P.M.
13 Monopolize
16 Bassoon's kin
17 A Barton or a Bow
18 Sew hastily
20 Irani's ancestor
21 Olympics event of 1900
24 Cheers for the torero
25 Meadow
26 Daiquiri ingredient
27 Tanker cargo
28 Chewing-gum flavor
30 Wire-fence deterrent
31 Brownish grays
33 Maltreat
34 In the manner of G.B.S.
37 Name of the only biennial summer Olympics, 1906
39 Event of the summer Olympics, 1920
41 Goddess: Lat.
42 Opposite of yeses
43 Navy's mascot
44 Lamb's mother
45 Downhiller's item
47 "My Life ——" (1985 film)
51 Boston Bruin great
52 Shopping complex
55 ——-Cat (winter transport)
57 Coach Parseghian
58 Sell to the consumer
62 Jacob's twin
63 Sketches
67 Olympics event of 1900
71 Modus ——
73 Criminal crew
74 Montezuma's people
77 Kinsman: abbr.
78 ——-fi
80 Peace Nobelist Wiesel
81 Caviar, essentially
82 Bruce Wayne's alter ego
86 Neighbor of Que.
88 One of Turner's networks
90 Debtors' chits
91 Home of Iowa State
93 Partner of wide
95 Olympics medal competition of 1912
98 Olympics events of 680 B.C.
103 Olympics fencer
104 Eagle's residence
105 Expired, as a subscription
106 No-chevron G.I.'s
107 Fleeting
109 Squirrel's tidbit
111 Eternally: poetic
112 N.Y.S.E. biggie
115 Ripped
116 Where Olympics swimmers raced, 1896
120 Shakespearean oldster
121 First words of a Dickens title
122 Frisbees, e.g.
123 Trebek of "Jeopardy!"
124 Part of i.e.
125 Luge, for one
126 Ox harness
127 Double this for a vitamin deficiency

DOWN

1 Jawline flab
2 Irish Rose's guy
3 Creator of "Nana"
4 Londoner's last letter
5 Seashore picnic
6 Rowing-event must
7 Approximately
8 Where Gauguin painted
9 Not an amateur
10 Delivers a better oration
11 Hidden gunman
12 Starts up the TV
13 Balloon filler
14 Andersen's birthplace
15 Knightly deeds
17 Newscaster Katie
19 Golf gp.
20 Kenya's chief port
22 "Take a bow!"
23 Warner who played Charlie Chan
29 Has a tantrum
30 Thai coin
32 Salt Lake City college team
34 Cross the goal line
35 Deeply sincere
36 "Land of Enchantment"
38 Bygone bird
39 "Young Frankensteir flunky
40 Leavening agent
46 Poverty
48 Risky
49 Assn.
50 What limos guzzle
53 Chou En-——
54 Move for 103-Acros
56 Eithers' correlatives
59 Scuba-tank supply
60 Pension-plan abbr.
61 "The Ipcress File" author Deighton
64 Cry of discovery
65 Updated "Oz," with "The"
66 Bank's payoff: abbr.
68 The Begleys
69 Sal, in a song
70 Volts, ergs, etc.
71 Scepter's go-with
72 Kind of shooter
75 Tennis venue
76 Mobuto —— Seko, Zaire president
79 Babyish
83 Coleridge's ancient
84 Femme friends
85 Late-style: prefix
87 Filled tortilla
89 Two British cents: va
90 "Tell it like ——"
92 Mott and Wall in Ne York
94 Gather on Alumni Day
96 River landings
97 Ruined city of Jorda
98 Livestock
99 Villains' adversaries
100 Biblical landing site
101 "Grease" director Kleiser
102 Solidly built
108 "—— little teapot . .
110 Threesome
112 "Survivor" setting
113 Six-pack buy
114 Ankle-length skirt
117 Nickname for Edward
118 Put it to
119 Make a pinch



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 1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Anna Maloya, Miss Russia, with David Saity, and his jewelry.

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